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STRAIGHT WORDS FOR MR. SNYDER

THE Government, Sir Stafford Cripps declared, "have not the slightest intention of devaluing the pound"; the problem of dollar shortage—a problem in which the U.S.A. is equally involved—will be met immediately by a three months' stand-still in new purchases from the dollar area; and, unless forthcoming negotiations with the U.S. Government lead to a "thorough-going solution," then "resolute action" will be taken to remodel our import programme and defend our standards of full employment and welfare. If the Chancellor means what he says, and is ready to accept the full implications, we applaud his statement. It is a brave and straightforward rejection of the American argument that world recovery must be sought through currency manipulations designed to reduce real wages in debtor countries. Mr. Snyder is bluntly told that a crisis for which the American economy is primarily responsible will not be met here by jettisoning the planning and fair shares of the welfare State.

That it is a crisis is undeniable. An April-June dollar deficit of £157 millions, and a fall in gold reserves from £471 millions to £406 millions, after crediting £85 millions from Marshall Aid and £7 millions from Canada—these are ominous figures. Even though we have had to meet exceptional difficulties—cessation of U.S. purchases of colonial primary products, leakages of dollars through the sterling area system and postponement of foreign buying of British goods as a result of American "sterling to be devalued" propaganda—it is obvious that inaction in this situation would result soon in absolute depletion of our reserves and consequently a violent, enforced curtailment of even essential imports. As it is, the reserve is likely to be down to £300 millions by October. Though our position is strengthened by the Argentine trade pact, and will shortly (there is good reason to expect) be reinforced by a new agreement with the U.S.S.R., the case for the halt in which fresh dollar purchases, to be followed—if necessary—by selective retrenchment in imports of American goods, is irresistible, however disagreeable it may be to lobbies on Capitol Hill.

Sir Stafford sees clearly the means he must adopt for immediate defence in a situation of fundamental economic disequilibrium aggravated by the U.S. recession. Does he see with equal clarity the need for positive steps which must be taken, as we argue in a leading article, to compensate in other directions for the inevitable curtailment of trade with a sub-continent which insists on exporting more than it imports, and whose capitalists will invest their surplus abroad only on conditions politically insufferable to free peoples? If the U.S.A. can overcome the economic schizophrenia which is now impelling it to undo all its costly work of reconstruction abroad in order to keep its own system running, then the world may once again trade on a multilateral basis. Till then, we must expand our trade in directions where expansion is wanted and can be planned.

The Paris Agreement

The agreement reached in Paris on a new intra-European payments scheme has been described as a compromise between the views of Britain and those of the United States and Belgium; but, in fact, the provisions represent so substantial a victory for Sir Stafford Cripps that the plan has had a chilly reception in America. In a magisterial speech Sir Stafford appears to have convinced the O.E.E.C. Council that the price for getting rid of bilateralism would be too high if it meant a financial cataclysm in Britain; and the resulting agreement certainly does a good deal more to safeguard Britain's position than to lead to the multilateralism on which the U.S. Administration is set. In the coming year, up to one quarter of the sterling and other credits advanced to "debtors" in the Marshall Plan area will be transferable (though not directly convertible into dollars); and, in so far as credits are transferred, the lending country will forfeit *pro tanto* the "conditional" dollars covering its loan. This, it is true, will introduce a measure of competition within the Marshall Plan family, but the bulk of the "drawing rights" will still be tied bilaterally to purchases from the lending country. Moreover, Sir Stafford made this concession conditional on undertakings by Belgium which amount to a substantial safeguard against the loss by Britain of gold or dollars. Belgium—the principal European creditor—agrees not to accept more than $40 million in transfers of credits and also to take steps (presumably by increasing her imports) to keep her total trade surplus in Europe to a ceiling of $440 million. Belgium's probable deficit in the dollar zone is put at $200 million. When her trade surplus in Europe exceeds that figure, she will make long-term loans to her principal debtors—Britain, France and Holland. If her surplus in Europe reaches, in fact, the $440 million mark, she will receive from the United States—over and above her basic $200 million—the sum of $152,500,000, which she can spend, without American scrutiny, on anything she pleases—a curious variation of the original Marshall Plan proviso that dollars must be spent on essentials for recovery. The rest of Belgium's credits to her debtors, namely $87,500,000, will have to be financed out of her own pocket. In short, the agreement does little or nothing to solve the overriding problem—Western Europe's global dollar deficit; nor does it meet the fundamental difficulty that in existing

circumstances greater freedom of trade in Europe would mean still greater disequilibrium in balances of payments. All that has happened is that Belgium has joined the United States in helping to postpone the evil day by lending.

President Truman and Senator Taft

The shadow of the 1950 elections loomed large over Capitol Hill last week. The crucial issue in them will be the battle of President Truman and his Fair Deal supporters against Senator Taft, who is due to fight his seat in Ohio, and the bi-partisan conservative majority in Congress which he now unquestionably commands. At each challenge from the President, Congress has proved more obdurate. His demand for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act met its final defeat last week when the opposition, skilfully led by Senator Taft, finally passed a new Labour Bill through the Senate into which every vital section of the Taft-Hartley Act has been written in the form of amendments. If the President follows through his previous strategy, he will veto the new Bill, thus keeping his own record clear on the matter and ensuring that organised labour will continue to throw its political weight against his opponents in Congress and especially into the Ohio contest, in which more than the President's prestige will be involved. The Administration's minor triumph last week was the passage of the Housing Bill; but on this issue it had Senator Taft's support, and even then the Bill squeezed through the House by the most narrow of margins after the Democratic leaders had put strong pressure on their nominal party majority. The Education Bill, after some amendment, may follow the President's housing programme into law, but this is relatively unimportant. The greater part of his welfare programme seems destined to hover in the Congressional limbo until the next elections. Congress is in no mood to pass his proposals for extended social security, a compulsory national health service, or the vast and expensive agricultural support programme. Civil Rights, too, are at present only a question of academic debate. In spite of Mr. Truman's energetic fight for a better Congress last November, he has been no more successful with the present legislators on Capitol Hill than he was with their predecessors.

American Economy Shrinks

Undoubtedly, Congressional uncertainty about the economic outlook is reflected in the current economy drive. Confronted with a Budget deficit of nearly two billion dollars—a quarter of which is due to the Republicans' vote-seeking decision to cut taxes last year—Congress has been looking round for chances to trim Federal spending. The recession has not yet gone far enough for pump-priming to seem the obvious course to a legislature which thinks the first and easiest solution is to "ease the burden on business." Industrial production continues to fall steadily—part of the Budget deficit results from a shortfall in revenue due to declining individual incomes—and unemployment and short-time keep pace with the fall. American economists still disagree in their forecasts of the depth and duration of this recession, the more conservative arguing that this is merely a normal and anticipated adjustment and the more liberal urging immediate State intervention before the cumulative effects of the economic decline get out of hand. This conflict of opinion ranges right up to the President's level. Dr. Nourse, one of his leading economic advisers, restrained him from too much interference with the inflationary upswing and is now proposing an equally orthodox reaction to the deflation. Mr. Keyserling, whose voice is also heard in the White House, is not as frightened of the word "slump" as some of his colleagues and has been demanding effective and early action by the President to control the downswing in time.

A Time for Expansion?

Mr. Truman's own views should be revealed this week, when he presents his half-yearly economic report to Congress. The President is certainly in favour of controls, and has asked for them on a number of occasions. He can, indeed, lay the blame for the abrupt reversal of the inflation since last October at the door of Congress, which refused to give him the anti-inflation measures he requested. Apart from fiscal adjustments, the President may decide to call, at least in principle, for public works. Plans are already prepared for a public works programme costing more than $1.5 billions, and other projects, to the tune of $4.5 billions, are partially drafted and could be brought forward fairly quickly. Senator Murray, with seven Democratic colleagues, had a friendly reception from the President last week, when they outlined their "Economic Expansion Act" designed to stimulate investment and production and to cope with unemployment. But Congress, at this moment, has little taste for Keynesian proposals. Its immediate reaction to economic difficulties is penny-pinching. Yet the President cannot afford the luxury of indecision. He must act if the decline goes on, if only for his Fair Deal record.

World Survey of the Crisis

The key position occupied by the United States in the international economy is brought out vividly in the *World Economic Report, 1948*, issued this week by the United Nations' Department of Economic Affairs. It shows that though the credit balance of the U.S. on merchandise trade account fell from $9.6 billion in 1947 to $5.5 billion in 1948, the volume of U.S. exports last year was still almost twice as great as in 1937, while the quantum of U.S. imports was only 8 per cent. above the pre-war figure. Whereas Britain, in the 19th century, had a large surplus of manufactured exports but a large import surplus of foodstuffs and raw materials, the U.S.A. is playing the anomalous role of being a net exporter both of manufacturers and primary products on an immense scale. The persistent dollar shortage arising from this situation in the rest of the world has been aggravated by the U.S. recession and the consequent reduction of American purchases of raw materials, such as cocoa, wool, rubber and tin from the sterling area. Hence, though world trade has been precariously maintained by American dollar grants, loans and investments, the disequilibrium is fundamental; and the Report points to the disquieting and growing discrepancy between the export prices of the United States (89 per cent. above 1937) and those of the rest of the world (138 per cent. up). This disparity is a main factor in the continued failure of the volume of U.S. imports of manufactures to reach the 1937 level; and, so long as most trade outside the dollar area is conducted behind the shelter of bilateral agreements, this price disparity is likely to continue. Noting gloomily that, outside the "rouble bloc," where production and internal exchanges of goods are steadily on the upgrade, world curves of production and commerce are already beginning to decline before physical shortages in many countries have been met, the Report concludes that the optimism of the early post-war period was "premature," and that the maladjustments that had to be overcome have "proved more serious than had been expected" when Marshall Aid was conceived.

No Simple Remedy

Those who hold that a short-cut to world recovery is to be sought in multilateral trade, devaluation of currencies and free convertibility will find little support for their case in the Report. It admits that bilateralism has had a restrictive effect both on the volume of international trade and on the very necessary flow of capital investment in under-developed countries; and it concedes that, if the resulting "grave repercussions on national employment and prosperity in numerous countries" could be disregarded, devaluation might do something to restore equilibrium in the international price structure. It is emphasised, however, that the full benefit of multilateral trade depends essentially upon "changes in the nature of production and consumption in all the countries involved." In other words, if Britain had a sufficient overseas trade surplus to revert to her old position of running a large import surplus with Europe, and if Europe could achieve a net export surplus to under-developed countries which managed to develop, in turn, an active balance of trade with the U.S.A., then the mechanism might once again begin to work more smoothly. But, though the Report emphasises the necessity of a "switch" in Western Europe from production of consumer goods to output of capital goods, and the equal need for an expansion of East-West trade within Europe, the view is taken that the task of rebuilding the sort of triangular structure on which pre-war international trade was based is "one which can hardly be solved in a short time or by schematic methods." The immediate crisis with which Sir Stafford Cripps has to deal forms only one facet of an increasingly grave international problem.

The Railway Problem

The last-minute intervention by Mr. Isaacs in the railway dispute has had, at any rate, the welcome result of averting a "go-slow" campaign which would, by this time, have caused disastrous dislocation of transport. It has yet to be seen, however, whether this week's talks will produce an effective mechanism for dealing with the trouble. The general expectation is that some sort of Court of Inquiry will be appointed; but, if its terms of reference are confined to assessing the "justification" for the men's claims in relation, on the one hand, to the cost of living, and, on the other, to the railways' prospective net receipts, after meeting the interest charge required to cover fully the compensation allotted by the State to ex-stockholders, it is difficult to see how the Court can arrive at any logical or convincing decision. Its temptation will be to try to tide matters over by "splitting the difference." It is impossible, in our view, to arrive at any sound basis for determining the correct level either of railway charges or railway wages until the capitalisation of the lines is re-assessed at a figure related, as closely as possible, to a reasonable estimate of their earning capacity. Clearly, nationalised transport must ultimately earn a sufficient surplus over operating costs to cover the charges arising from the true economic value of fixed assets and replacement needs; but it does not follow that either the users of transport or transport employees should be required indefinitely to carry the burden of the compensation which the State, as an act of political expediency, thought fit to accord to the dispossessed private investor in railway stock.

he Dockers Stay Out

The London dock strike is now more than a spute over the two Canadian ships. Nearly a ndred vessels are now tied up, and, to the ven thousand members of the independent evedores' Union who struck first, there have w been added some two thousand more workers longing to the T. and G.W. The economic loss rough delay and disorganisation has reached rious proportions, even if a settlement could be ickly secured. The dockers struck again when e Canadian Seamen's Union declared the two ips to be "black" after the agreement between e Canadian strikers and shipowners broke wn. Though the dockers believe their offer work all the ships in London, save the *Beaverae* and *Argomont*, is reasonable, the port emoyers insist that the dock labour agreement ecifically excludes any discrimination of this nd. To the dockers, this transforms their strike o a lock-out, and their obduracy is intensified the continuing rivalries and resentments that ve been at the bottom of dock labour troubles some time. Neither side is in a mood for mpromise, though the strike might be broken. he simple solution for Mr. Isaacs would be to ear the Canadian ships with military labour, rmitting work to proceed on the others. But ll the Government now give way on a matter principle—since it wishes to take this chance isolating the small Communist group among e strikers—or will the strikers go back quietly if oops are used to work all held-up ships? he strike is no longer a matter of labour idarity: it has become an increasingly serious onomic problem. Barely concealed threats that e dock labour scheme and the guaranteed wage ay have to be revised are not likely to conciliate e dockers, who struck earlier this year from ar of speed-up and redundancy.

he New China

The celebrations of the twenty-eighth anniversy of the founding of the Chinese Communist rty and of the twelfth anniversary of the outeak of the Sino-Japanese war have been the casion of important statements on Communist licy. Madame Sun Yat-sen, revered abroad as ll as in China, has written to Mao Tse-tung in aise of the Chinese people's revolution. She eaks for many who have never been revolunaries when she says: "We have shed the ndage of imperialism and colonial policies. . . . he people are marching toward a newer and ghter summit." Mao Tse-tung himself outlined e future of the Chinese Communism. His four egories of workers, farmers, small capitalists bourgeoisie, and "liberal capitalists" or owners industries vital to the nation, were already antiated in his *New Democracy*. The workers, conlling labour, must co-operate with capitalists, th internally and internationally. In foreign airs the Communist slogans include the early ning of a peace treaty with Japan, based on tsdam; the demilitarisation and democratisan of Japan; a joint Chinese-Japanese "people's nt" to oppose American domination in Japan d the joint defence of the Far East by the S.S.R. and China against all aggressors. Here a policy that recognises that, for a considerable riod at least, Communist China has need of the st if she is to become an industrialised nation. t trading relations with the West—which ans Britain and the United States—will dend on the recognition of the new regime in ina, and trading experts, with the blessing of State Department, are now in London dissing this problem with their British opposite numbers. The Kuomintang cannot be resuscitated and we have everything to gain by recognising the New China.

France and Viet-Nam

Our Paris Correspondent writes: The long-drawn-out debate in the French National Assembly on the military estimates has shown how distasteful to everybody is the war in Indo-China. Out of the total 120,000 fighting on the French side, 60,000 troops are alleged to be "black," mostly Senegalese; and a number of "coloured" Deputies asked whether it was constitutionally justifiable to make one "coloured" race inside the French Union fight another "coloured" race. The Government retorted that all the peoples of the French Union were united by law to defend their common interests. Rather more evasive were the Ministers' answers concerning the employment in Viet-Nam of former S.S. men and members of the Vichy militia who, it is alleged, were allowed to enter the Foreign Legion, instead of serving their sentences in France. One allegation, to which the Government gave no precise answer, was that the two S.S. men who participated in the Oradour massacre (the French "Lidice") in 1944 were now fighting in Indo-China. Two Left-wing (non-Communist) papers, *Combat* and *Franc-Tireur*, alleged that a large number of atrocities were being committed by different kinds of soldiers fighting on the French side against the Vietnamese, and gave numerous lurid instances. *Franc-Tireur* also alleged that various kinds of torture, including torture by electricity, were being practised on Vietnamese prisoners; it did not, however, deny that atrocities were also being committed by the other side, but said that this was no excuse. The Government denies any atrocities on the French side—though it admits that there may have been "isolated cases."

If, in talking to official Frenchmen, one gets down to brass tacks, one soon discovers that what the war in Viet-Nam really amounts to is a sort of rearguard action. It means "hanging on" until—until what? Obviously until the United States think up some general scheme of Western Defence in South-East Asia, and make up their mind to use the Langson-Moncay-Hanoi-Haiphong area as a "redoubt" which would stop communications between China and Viet-Nam.

Whether or not in their heart of hearts the French Government have any faith in building an anti-Red redoubt in Indo-China with the help of the "Emperor" Bao Dai, whose support among the population appears for the present to be negligible, it must, nevertheless, have come rather as a shock to them to read in the *Herald-Tribune* Stewart Alsop's dispatch from Saigon—a dispatch reflecting, in all probability, at least one school of thought in the State Department. The gist of it was that the Americans would be crazy to have anything to do with Bao Dai's set-up, or with anyone else "representing French colonialism," and that their best bet would be to "bring the whole weight of American strength to promote and support" the Communist Government of Ho Chi-Minh. Such a Government, Mr. Alsop says, would owe no allegiance to any Great Power—not France, not Russia nor the United States. All this sounds a trifle paradoxical, and one French comment I heard on the proposal was: "All very well for the Americans to set up an anti-Communist redoubt in Indo-China with the help of Ho Chi-Minh (if Ho Chi-Minh is willing, which we doubt); but what about the 'full weight of America's strength?' Will this 'strength' not be represented by French troops again? In that case, is it not a bit ungracious to speak so contemptuously and self-righteously about 'French colonialism'? It will take some hard thinking to get out of this vicious circle."

PARLIAMENT: Making It Look Easy

Wednesday.

NOWADAYS a good Chancellor of the Exchequer must be unpopular. But when, like Cripps, he is also Minister of Economic Affairs, the virtues which antagonise at home may win esteem if applied abroad. Fresh from his persistent refusal to accept the Belgian-American plan for intra-European payments, Cripps was much applauded in the House for his favourable compromise. With a victor's courtesy, he thanked his American and Belgian colleagues for their help, and were it not for Clement Davies' tribute to the Chancellor for overcoming the opposition in Paris, many Members might have been left with the impression that the talks had been as easy as the Chancellor always makes such negotiations seem.

The only jangling note came from the ex-Labour Party Member, Ivor Thomas. Like a prude who in her middle years is converted to complete *laissez-faire*, Thomas has entered his new phase of life with a certain extravagance. Why doesn't Socialist Britain take an example from Conservative Belgium, he wanted to know? But it's useless for Thomas to try and attract attention by showing off his political clothes. Even the Tories don't want to look.

Earlier in the afternoon the new Independent Group, sitting in formation on the furthest back-bench on the Government side of the House, had allied itself with the Communists in supporting the dockers' strike. The Minister of Labour had replied to a Private Notice question by R. A. Butler when Platts-Mills and, later, Piratin joined in. Piratin asked—irrelevantly unless it was to refer to Mellish who had brought some information to the Home Secretary—whether Isaacs encouraged Members to be stool-pigeons. At that suggestion, Mellish, to the delight of the Tories, asked Piratin to "come outside." Piratin, by now, was somewhat involved with the Speaker, who asked him to repeat his last remark—rather as a pre-war judge would ask, "What is a saxophone?" "I said 'a stool-pigeon,' sir," said Piratin in order to make things clearer. And having repeated his offensive charge, he then withdrew it at the Speaker's reprimand.

The House then settled down to a quiet debate on housing. Gone—for the time being—are the days when the Chamber would resound with the thwacks of the Minister of Health belabouring the Tories, and with their groans. His achievement can be seen in houses; the strength of his argument in the Tories' relative numbers. Walter Elliot obviously didn't want to provoke the Minister unduly, and his speech lacked, therefore, the enthusiasm of hostility towards the Government as it lacked vigorous conviction about the Tory case. The best critical speeches came from Pritt, Marples and Walker-Smith. Walter Eliot, a kindly and civilised person, whom Pritt called "a mouse and not a grown man," attempted to disagree with Pritt. He had as much success as an old-fashioned Nanny trying to quell the head-boy of a Progressive School.

It would have been too much to expect a housing debate to end without fervour. When Walker-Smith was winding-up, the Tories, having defeated their own argument with conflicting demands for more and less controls, began to shout for the Minister. Aneurin Bevan then returned to give them a short talk on elementary good manners. His triumph would have been complete had his message to the Chief Whip that he might be absent reached the Tory Chief Whip, to whom it was sent. As it was, the Government Chief Whip forgot to send the message through the usual channels. And when next day the Tory Chief Whip explained that he knew nothing of the Minister's intentions, and the Minister explained that it wasn't his fault, the back-benchers had the satisfaction of thinking that even the Chief Whip sometimes relaxes, and liked him for it all the more.

MAURICE EDELMAN

THE TWO SOLUTIONS

SINCE 1945 it has been a platitude of Socialist propaganda that the Tories have no policy. If this was ever true, it is certainly not true to-day. Seizing the opportunity presented by the renewed threat to our gold reserves, the Opposition has at last come out with a clear-cut alternative to Socialism. Starting, correctly enough, from the principle that we can only maintain our solvency by reducing costs and prices, they go on to maintain that this can only be done by ruthless reductions in Government expenditure. In the House of Commons, Mr. David Eccles, the ablest financial expert in the Conservative Party, has spoken of cuts involving "hundreds of millions of pounds." Since then the *Sunday Times*, reiterating his case and recalling the 1931 crisis, has demanded a National Government to perform an operation so unpleasant that no single party could undertake it. Finally, the *Daily Mail*, to make sure that no one misunderstood what was meant, came out last Tuesday with proposals for "an economy scheme which would make the Geddes axe look like a pocket-knife."

It would be a grave mistake to dismiss such proposals as impracticable. In the short run, a deflationary policy of this kind could be railroaded through, and, provided the American slump eases off next spring (as many experts expect that it will), might achieve its object of cutting export prices, besides winning for Britain the confidence of Wall Street and Capitol Hill. We should never forget that the policy of the National Government after 1931 "worked" admirably. By leaving the Gold Standard, permitting unemployment to rise steeply and cutting back the social services, Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin drastically reduced our costs of production. The classic method of dealing with a slump might "work" once again—at a social price.

That it can still be effective is seen from the example of Belgium. True, the Belgian Government started in 1945 with unique advantages. Belgium was relatively unscathed by war; and the port of Antwerp had been restored by the British and American armies, which also left behind vast stores of surplus-equipment. In addition, Belgium could obtain dollars by the sale of uranium from the Congo. These advantages were exploited to the full by the Bank of Belgium, which virtually controls Cabinet policy. It permitted no programme of capital re-equipment and no such luxuries as social security. When the recession began, it made no effort to maintain full employment. On the contrary, figures of unemployment were permitted to rise until to-day Belgium, the paragon of deflation, has the highest proportion of workers on the dole in the whole world. With purchasing power thus conveniently reduced, the Belgium Government has no need for import licences.

If Mr. Eccles were Chancellor of the Exchequer, he could probably achieve similar spectacular successes in this country within a period of twelve months. With the abolition of food subsidies and children's allowances and the cancellation of the improvements in old-age pensions, and with two million unemployed, there would no longer be any need for rationing, except possibly of fats. Imports and exports could be freed from the "disincentive" of control; prices would fall automatically and, as for wages, a sufficient degree of unemployment would weaken the trade unions' bargaining power and force them to accept a "realistic" return for their labour.

It is a grave mistake for Labour spokesmen to suggest that anything has happened since 1945 which rules out a deflationary policy of this kind after a Conservative victory at the polls. Of course, there would be industrial unrest and more Communism; but talk of a "blood bath" is surely exaggerated. The clock would click drearily backwards, and a divided and frustrated Labour movement would be impotent to offer any serious resistance to a process which could only end in the submission of Britain, along with the Commonwealth, to the capricious rule of economic law, symbolised by the American dollar.

Here, indeed, is the main electoral strength of the Government's position. In defending the welfare State, the Labour Party is also defending our national independence and the future of the Commonwealth. Since 1945, the positions of the two main parties have been completely reversed. It is the Tories to-day who are the internationalists, ready to sacrifice British interests for the sake of an abstract principle. It is the Socialists who are sternly defending our island liberties and the economic independence of the Commonwealth against foreign hegemony.

This defence, however, has been made infinitely more difficult by the errors of the past. In the period between 1945 and the summer of 1947, Sir Stafford Cripps used all his formidable intellectual armoury to defeat objections in his own party to the policy of a return to multilateralism. Two years were wasted in this vain endeavour, in the course of which solemn pledges were made to Congress which now cannot be fulfilled. The Fuel Crisis, followed swiftly by the Convertibility Crisis, seemed at first to have dispelled the illusions of Sir Stafford and his colleagues. But once again last spring they achieved a brief ascendancy in the councils of the Cabinet. Misled by a temporary improvement in our balance of trade—and an equally temporary cessation of the drain on our dollar reserves—and encouraged no doubt by by-election successes, Sir Stafford and his Brains Trust indulged in an orgy of de-control and de-rationing and permitted themselves the luxury of day-dreams about a return to normalcy. These day-dreams have been dispelled—we hope finally—by the first impact of the American recession. At the very last moment, it has been realised that the only alternative to a surrender, more abject than that of 1931, is the Socialist policy of planned trade, which Sir Stafford used to dismiss as Left-wing extremism.

It should not be imagined, of course, that we can, or should, become wholly independent of the dollar area. As long as we can foresee, Britain will remain dependent on the New World for the major part of her imports of cotton, nickel, tobacco and a number of non-ferrous metals—not to mention Canadian wheat. Autarky is out of the question for the Commonwealth no less than for Great Britain; and it would be absurd, even if it were possible, to switch from complete dependence on the dollar area to an equally complete dependence on the rouble bloc. What we must strive for is a position of stable balance in politics, economics and strategy alike.

Few except the most doctrinaire anti-Socialists would question this as a long-term objective. The issue to-day, however, is much more urgent. Will our gold reserves stand the strain to which they will be subjected during the next twelve months? Can the British welfare State survive until unemployment in the U.S.A. reaches a figure at which even this reactionary Congress will be compelled to reverse its attitude and fight its way out of depression by planned spending?

It is this short-term problem which, for the first time since 1945, presents the electorate with a clear-cut choice of policies. The Tory solution—another May Committee and another 1931—has the advantage of simplicity. It demands on the part of the Government not action to master the economic crisis but a passive willingness to permit the iron "laws of economics" once again to prevail. It offers to the electorate, in particular to the middle classes, the bait of reduced taxation and the hope of falling prices, and it glosses over the inevitable concomitants—unemployment and cuts in the social services.

To answer it effectively, the Government must show something more than obstinacy. We cannot prevent another 1931 simply by repeating "it shall never happen again," and nothing will save us from economic collapse if our gold reserves continue to leak away. Unless the Cabinet finds methods of cutting costs and prices, other than those of old-fashioned capitalist deflation, a capitalist deflation will occur. This means that, even at the risk of temporary sporadic unemployment, price controls must be used not to safeguard but to squeeze out the inefficient producers. Simultaneously, sanctions must be enforced throughout industry on those who fail to fulfil their export target—they can no longer be permitted to unload on the home market—and steps must be taken to ensure that British manufacturers carry out our side of the bilateral trade pacts we are making, even if this means the creation of a State Export Corporation for trade with the planned economies of the Eastern bloc. The present crisis is destroying the half-way house in which the Cabinet has preferred to live and forces upon it for immediate solution those basic problems of Socialism which it has tended to dismiss as merely theoretical. We shall either be defeated by the crisis or emerge from it a Socialist State.

DISMANTLING

THEY look just like any other steelworks, only a great deal more imposing than any I remember. They lie sprawling over five square miles of the Ruhr a little beyond Duisburg as the autobahn comes from the south. From the distance they project into the sky in towers and cupolas of blackened metal, girdered, braced, and bastioned for long endurance. These are the works that August Thyssen built before the first world war, the biggest productive unit of their kind in Europe and the ancient pride of German heavy industry. For 50 years this massive equipment made steel for Germany. Now the British are taking it apart and preparing to send it away.

Inside the grey surrounding walls there is silence except for the occasional crash of falling metal. "Mind out," says Mr. Riddell, the supervising British engineer, who is a dour but kindly man, "they're dismantling here." But none of the men crawling high up on girders drops a spanner on my head. There is no resistance among the six or seven hundred sorry men and women who are working on the job: only the sullen resentment of the people of Hamborn whose livelihood is falling apart in pace with Thyssen's steelworks. In the rolling mill sheds, where dismantling is already well advanced, the lumps of equipment detached from the parent jungle stand ready for delivery as soon as the allocations are received from the Reparations Agency in Brussels. Back in Düssel-

dorf the German industrialists have told me how the machinery is rusting away in heaps. Mr. Riddell is not much moved to hear this, for he is used to it. He points out the anti-rust coating on all exposed bearings, the grease on the gears, the careful way that each machine is ticketed and mounted upon wooden joists ready for enrailment. The German industrialists are no better at telling the truth than they used to be.

The Thyssen works are for the moment the real centre of the dismantling battle. More trouble has occurred in other cases, and especially at the synthetic oil plants, but the reason for this seems to be that the German owners—acting nowadays together and with great self-confidence—have decided to fight an advance-guard action over plants they can scarcely hope to save so as to improve their position on the Thyssen complex. There need be no doubt of the extreme importance which attaches to this German resistance to further dismantling. It absorbs every conversation, unites almost every fraction of German society, serves as a rallying point for the self-assurance and aplomb which the Germans are rapidly recovering, and provides their first real opportunity of harassing and weakening the various organs of Allied control. As a stick with which to prod at Allied prestige the dismantling issue is unrivalled; and it is a stick which the Allies themselves have made and which only they could make.

The orchestration of protest has to be heard to be believed. It comes from all and sundry in the same steady and malignant tones. It comes from the handful of controlling owners who find it convenient to appear thus early on the scene, men with old familiar names like Zangen of Mannesmann's. It comes from the new generation of managers, competent, clear-eyed gentlemen turning fifty who were never prominent under Hitler, men like Harten of the *Verein Deutscher Eisenhuetteleute*, Salewski of the *Wirtschaftsvereinigung Eisen und Stahl*, Dinkelbach of the Ruhr steel trusteeship—whose views can in no way claim distinction, however, from those of their forerunners. It comes from the political parties which run the Western Zones; from the Communists, arguing now that "dismantlement is over in the Soviet Zone, while here they are still adding thousands to the tens of thousands out of work . . ."; and from demagogues like Pastor Goebel, the hot-gospelling chairman of the refugee organisations, whose main card is outraged nationalism. In short, it comes from everyone.

Much money is being spent in attempting to widen the already perceptible rift in Western opinion on the subject. The latest pamphlet of the industrialists, issued in the U.S. Zone but unlicensed, is entitled "A Setback to Civilisation" and claims to expose the "visible economic nonsense" of British dismantling, which it also describes (in a fair sample of its English) as "unintelligentable." A cartoon depicts a gardener with a watering can held before him, marked "Marshall Plan," and a roller, pulled behind him, and dragging over the flowers, marked "Dismantling." This open assault upon the British (with the clear implication that the Americans thoroughly approve) was given to me quite openly in Düsseldorf.

A new German proposal is that the Thyssen Works should be placed "in the service of the whole of Europe for the benefit of those who have suffered from the war and above all for the children." It is all wrong, apparently, that the German industrialists are hard and naughty men: on the contrary, they ask only to work for the good of little children. We have had the fine and edifying sight of Dr. Harten, the main propagandist for this benevolent idea, explaining how great a backing he has received in the United States, from whence much money for the Thyssen Works would suddenly become available, it seems, once the Germans themselves were allowed to invest a little of their own money in the plant. Nearly 150 Germans from the Western Zones, the biggest delegation of all, spent the first day of the international Buchmanite Congress in Switzerland last month in crying out for aid against dismantling.

The root of the British difficulty here, and it is very great, is that the authorities cannot explain why this work of dismantling was not carried through a year or two ago, when German protests would have gone for little inside or out of Germany. And they cannot explain this because to do so would be publicly to admit and recount their own hesitations as well as their long and bitter struggle against American attempts to stop dismantling altogether. This delay is a tremendous handicap. The British authorities do what they can to talk about "security and reparations"; but it is safe to say that none of their arguments cut the least ice with the German public. For a German in the Ruhr, or even for any German no matter what his politics, it appears to make no sense to talk of "security and reparation" with reference to plants which are being dismantled four years after the end of the war. He believes much more easily that the British are fearful of commercial competition and that the Allies are feathering their nests at his expense. This belief, he is evidently glad to find, gives him plenty of scope for contempt of Western democracy.

The full effects of British dithering in Germany are now coming home to roost. It would be unjust to blame British military government for the lack of policy, or for the contradictions in policy, which have brought us to the point where the old German owners feel themselves firmly entrenched and strong enough again to speak their mind, where the whole pattern of ownership and influence remains indeed essentially unchanged, and where dismantling is becoming extremely difficult before much more than the surface is scratched. The responsibility lies higher up.

What is now being done may still make sense in terms of reparation; it seems to make very little in terms of security, and less than ever as time goes by. In 1938 the Ruhr produced about 18 million tons of steel. Even the German owners admit that it could now, allowing time for repair and pushed hard, produce upwards of 13 millions. No doubt existing capacity is in reality even higher than this. Already the owners are planning expansion. According to the steelmasters' union in Düsseldorf, the sheet metal capacity stood at 100,000 tons in 1938; it would be "normal," they informed me, if this were now raised by new construction to 113,000 tons "in order to keep pace with other countries." Capital would become available from the United States, they thought, as soon as the "political issue" was solved—as soon, they explained, as the would-be investor could be clear that "the Russians won't be able to walk in and take over." French observers here consider that a good deal of quiet expansion is already in progress.

Worst of all, there is the time factor. It is bad enough to have to dismantle plants in 1949. what will it be like in 1950 and 1951, since the Thyssen Works can scarcely be dismantled in less than two years? The British out here may be able to carry off the situation now; they cannot do so indefinitely. The Germans are now an active factor and will redouble their efforts. Some hard thinking will have to be done, and done quickly, if British military government and British prestige are to be rescued from a position which is now invidious and may soon become dangerously weak. And the thinking will have to be done in London, not here.

BASIL DAVIDSON

Düsseldorf, July 2.

A LONDON DIARY

WHAT a brave and commanding figure Dimitrov was in 1933! For the moment he turned the table on the Nazis and gave hope and opportunity to their enemies. The London committee in defence of the victims of German Fascism was widely based. Ellen Wilkinson from her flat in Guilford Street was at the centre of much of the organisation which was supported by Liberals, Labourites and Conservatives as well as Communists. The Reichstag trial was, however, the last in which such action as holding a "counter-process" in London could be effective; it was the last in which the Nazis permitted any serious defence or even a public hearing of any kind. Most of us underestimated the Nazi movement then—none worse than the Communists. I have just been looking through the book which was published after the trial called *Signed G. Dimitrov*. It is clear throughout that he was one of the group of professional revolutionaries who worked with the assurance of the proletarian revolution not far ahead. Certainly he would have regarded it as totally impossible that only eight years after the Leipzig trial Hitler could invade the Soviet Union with an army drawn from the German working class and containing many who had been Communists. Probably his greatest achievement was to persuade the Communist Party in 1935 to adopt Popular Front tactics. This was one of those very rare occasions on which the Russian Party accepted or, indeed, listened to the advice of non-Russian Communists. As Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Dimitrov, who had been the close associate of Stalin, was himself to learn that to take any kind of an independent line was to earn a public rebuke, if not worse. Whether he was out of favour as well as out of health after his unlucky advocacy of Balkan Federation, no one seems to know. In power, he inevitably behaved like other Communist leaders. The outside world, if not Dimitrov, saw an unpleasant parallel between the trial of Petkov and the trial of Dimitrov fifteen years earlier. To accuse Dimitrov of "hypocrisy," however, is simply to misunderstand Communism. Dimitrov all his life was fighting a partisan battle for the victory of the Communist Party. He was not fighting at Leipzig for justice, a fair trial or freedom of speech. To imagine so was a bourgeois illusion.

* * *

"I got a kick out of telling her ladyship to take her cards somewhere else," said the country G.P., comparing notes with his colleagues at the B.M.A. Conference. "She said: 'Doctor, if I give you my patronage under the National Health Service, I shall, of course, expect you to continue your regular calls. I shall not come to your surgery.' She was livid when I told her it could not be done at eighteen bob a nob." So even for those G.P.s who pretend they are conscripts, the National Health Service has its compensations. This G.P. confessed to a friend of mine at the Conference that for years he had attended "her ladyship" ("the old so-and-so") without ever getting his bills paid in full, but because the "big house" connection had been good for

building his practice. There were, I gather, more gloats than grumbles over coffee at Harrogate. Even in the public discussion it was freely admitted that patients were being much more considerate and less exacting than any doctor had dared hope a year ago. Only about 2 per cent. were persecuting their doctors with "frivolous and unnecessary" calls, but that fraction is said to be responsible for the occupational disease of doctors—stomach ulcers. They talk about demanding penalties for abuse of the service. Another significant fact emerged—divisional meetings of the B.M.A. are only getting a tenth of the membership to turn out for medico-political meetings. The representatives called this "apathy," but maybe it is because the doctors are getting on with their job and are anxious to "make a go" of the Service.

* * *

Last week I referred to complaints about lack of sportsmanship or excessive anxiety to win among some American players at Wimbledon. No such criticism could possibly have been levelled against Schroeder or Mulloy in their terrific match with Brown and Sidwell. They were tested pretty severely, too, by a wrong line decision at a very critical moment. It was exceedingly exciting once again to see first-class tennis. I had not been to Wimbledon for about twelve years. The atmosphere had changed, I thought, on the whole, for the better. One of the players, an old friend from overseas, writes to me that "with 300,000 people visiting Wimbledon in a fortnight, England is undoubtedly becoming the most tennis conscious country in the world, leading America by a long way." This, he suggests, may be "due to the greater leisure and income enjoyed by the working class as well as the good organisation at Wimbledon and the network of the L.T.A. throughout the Counties." He adds that tennis "is no longer the game for the ladies and gents, but also for the schoolteachers, salesmen, typists and civil servants." In short, tennis has become a popular game. This explains why I once heard a Society woman, herself an excellent athlete, remark: "*No one* plays tennis nowadays."

* * *

Miss Freda Kirchwey, editor of the New York *Nation*, I see, is suing the New York educational authorities in an effort to get the Courts to lift the ban on the *Nation* from school libraries—a ban which has just been extended for another year. Two utterances by the Board of Superintendents responsible for the ban are quoted in last Wednesday's New York *Herald-Tribune*. Mr. James Marshall, of Manhattan, said he was opposed to a general ban, but thought that certain numbers of the magazine might be withdrawn, when necessary. "I do not believe," he said, "that we can properly ban a publication because it formerly offended." Mr. Blanshard's "anti-Catholic" articles (which started the trouble), the *Herald-Tribune* recalls, appeared over a year ago. Mr. Charles J. Bensley, of the Bronx, took a much sterner view. He declared that the *Nation* did not meet "curriculum standards" and "educational concepts." "Publications that do that," he said, "must be free of bias, positive, constructive, and developmental of understanding and good will." They must, presumably, also be written in good English. I also take it that *Reader's Digest*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*, for instance, are all free of bias and thoroughly developmental.

* * *

The University of Glasgow performs an excellent service in launching a new quarterly called "Soviet Studies" (*Basil Blackwell*, 25s. per annum). It is devoted to a scholarly analysis of Soviet development and to translations of otherwise inaccessible material. There are few things we need more. In the absence of actual translations from the Russian all we get are sudden exciting accounts of theoretical dissensions in Moscow, supported by short extracts from documents we have not seen. We are still without an English version of Varga's famous analysis of post-war capitalism or the text of the subsequent controversy or that of Zhdanov's criticisms of Soviet philosophers. If it had not been for Alexander Werth's *Musical Uproar in Moscow*, we should not have had the text or even know the nature of the controversy which has been raging round music in Russia. "Soviet Studies" seems likely to provide some at least of the material without which responsible journalists hesitate to comment on events in the U.S.S.R.

* * *

The following paragraph, headed *Embarrassment*, is taken from the South African weekly, *Forum* (May 7th). "A correspondent informs me that the letter referred to appeared on the main news page of the *Natal Mercury* of April 26th.

Nationalist newspapers have got over the embarrassing fact that Dr. and Mrs. Malan have been photographed with Indian, Pakistani and Ceylonese delegates to the Commonwealth conference either by excising the latter delegates or by not publishing the photographs. This perhaps is the background of a letter sent to the editor of the *Natal Mercury* by Mr. H. A. Willemse of Durban:

"The alleged radio picture you published on Friday, April 22, of Dr. Malan standing next to an Indian and Mrs. Malan seated next to Mr. Attlee on the same bench with an Indian woman, must be a lie. Our Premier and Mrs. Malan would never deign to mix socially with Indians. I am sure that if you inquired into the origin of the picture, you will find that it has been deliberately fabricated by some malicious anti-South Africa propaganda-maker who wishes to besmirch our Premier and Mrs. Malan in the eyes of their people."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

Opening a successful garden fête arranged by the Little Haywood and Colwich branch of the Stafford and Stone Conservative Association in the grounds of Bishton Hall on Saturday, Lady Shrewsbury said that while the Labour Party had immense capital behind it, Conservatives had nothing but the good hearts and good sense of their subscribers. *Stafford Newsletter.* (W. H. Hall.)

Mr. Garry Davis ("World Citizen No. 1") has cancelled his plan to hover over Chelmsford in a helicopter and address the people, because the machine is needed more urgently for spraying insecticide against the Colorado beetle in France. The Crusade for World Government announced yesterday.—*News Chronicle.* (E. V. Owen.)

All those who wish to be cured of carbuncles, gravel, and whatnot, and who desire luxurious bosoms, broccoli, etc., should lie down on their faces from 7.18 to 7.33 p.m. on June 23 (the Feast of the Molars), reciting the priestly "Arka, Arka, Tambouretta" while concentrating in thought on pottery, and so on.—Letter in *Picture Post.* (M. P. Prondman.)

It is a sex-hygiene film of American origin.

Councillor John D. Craig, Entertainments Committee chairman, said that the cuts ordered amounted to 20 per cent. of the picture. The birth, both natural and Caesarian, would be omitted, together with the American flag at the start of the picture.—*The Cinema.* (R. K. Neilson-Baxter.)

WHAT'S BITING THEM?

"Here is a pretty prospect—an endless vista of free false teeth with nothing to bite.—R. Boothby, M.P.

Of all the Labour ventures
That get the Tory's goat,
State aids to mastication
Cause most disapprobation,
The free Health Service dentures
Stick in the Tory throat.

Though Tories once demanded
Health Service from the State,
The teeth in Bevan's measure
They see with great displeasure
Now millions have been handed
False teeth upon a plate.

Unbridled stump-extraction
Means fewer fangs to fill
But molars by the jawful
Bode consequences awful,
Since Ministerial action
Put teeth into the Bill.

High costs may be admitted
But dentures still must fit,
Conservative back-benchers
May gnash their private dentures,
Yet how can teeth be gritted
Without the teeth to grit?

In times so stern and ruthless,
Who grudge defensive sums?
False teeth ad infinitum
Are but a minor item—
None dread the lion toothless,
Though arming to the gums!

These Tory Party censures
Short-sighted views denote.
The Tories are not bitten
By free false teeth for Britain,
So why should Labour dentures
Stick in the Tory throat?

SAGITTARIUS

A MEDITATION ON BEING BEATEN UP

I HAVE just been beaten up by the French police. It is a quite extraordinary sensation, and after a number of rather sleepless nights certain conclusions are possible. There are, of course, the obvious conclusions: I now find myself trembling very slightly and yet very definitely whenever I see a French policeman, I no longer ask them as I used to do for advice on how to get to the nearest Metro. station, and I find myself instinctively stiffening against the wall whenever the blue police vans pass, even when they are empty, when there is no one except the driver. I have been arrested for half an hour in Germany by the S.S., and once when accompanying Theodore Dreiser to the Spanish frontier I was arrested by some Spanish anarchists because I had forgotten to bring my passport from Barcelona, but the kind of anxiety which I feel today is of a kind which is far greater in degree than anything I have known before, when faced with arrest. At intervals I have resided in Paris in the Quartier St. Germain since my childhood. It is there that I was arrested, and it is very probable that I shall never live there again.

Let me begin from the beginning. I had been to see one of my French publishers, and I was on my way to meet an artist at the Café de Flore, which is very close to the Church of St. Germain des Près. I was feeling particularly delighted with life—it was one of those summer days when the walls of St. Germain des Près shine with a translucent biscuit-yellow, and I remember thinking of the strange distorted masks on the canvases of the very talented American artist I was going to see. She painted with some

of Grosz's fury: there were backgrounds littered with the corpses of concentration camps, and in the foreground there were long, spindly bird-like figures who seemed curiously indifferent to the turmoil, just as Mantegna's young warrior seems indifferent to the wars around him, though his very indifference is a sign of his intense participation. I remember thinking to myself, perhaps because I am a middle-aged professor and find myself occasionally seduced by the thought that the wars are over: "Oh, my dear child, you are very young—paint flowers, paint people, it's quite absurd of you to paint these horrors with the spindle-legged birds hovering in front of them. You will grow wiser, my dear. These are just nightmares: it will soon be over."

I was waiting for her outside the Café de Flore when the students came running down the Boulevard St. Germain from the direction of the Boulevard St. Michel. It was July 1, and about five o'clock. They had finished their *bachot* examinations. They surrounded two Simca cars, and I think both cars were decorated with ancient railway signals. There were about four hundred of these students, and they were entirely delightful to watch. They sang and shouted and danced down the street, and it is, of course, perfectly true that they held up the traffic. Then the police vans arrived. Their tyres screamed, and their sirens screamed louder. There was a panic among the students, for the police cars drove straight at them—I still cannot understand why none of the students were run down. The panic outside the Café de Flore was of the kind I have known during civil wars in China, when people throw themselves against the walls and you hear the dull patter of machine-gun fire from the watch-towers. The police cars came to a stop. The police jumped out with truncheons, revolvers at their sides, and their faces set for murder—the ugliest brood of Frenchmen I have ever seen. They simply threw themselves at isolated and defenceless groups of students, hurled them on to the pavement, cursed them in the foulest language, and then frog-marched those who were in their power to the police vans. After about four quite obviously innocent students had been clubbed and thrown into the car, I took out a piece of paper—it happened to be my marriage certificate—and began to take down the numbers on the collars of the more brutal policemen, forgetting perhaps that my cousin was no longer the Mayor of Paris and there was very little I could do with the numbers even if, in the excitement, I could copy them down accurately.

I have a very definite recollection of the next three minutes. Three policemen charged me, swore at me, threatened to "kick my arse right the way through," and then in unison decided to give me a lesson. Evidently, even in France, one should not take down numbers on collars. I remember five terrific blows on the side of my head, and then the whole of the Boulevard St. Germain began wheeling like a futurist painting. I was frog-marched to the van. I remember thinking: In the van it will be all right, it will be quite calm and probably very hot, for it was a hot day. But this is not at all the technique. The moment you are thrown into the van the beating begins again, and there are very well-fed policemen waiting to club you at the moment you are thrown in. I remember reading, while I was writing a book on the concentration camps, that at Helmno, the S.S. took particular pains to beat their prisoners right up to the moment when they were gassed. Sitting in that filthy van, while the policemen joked about all the terrors that waited for us, it looked very much as though the S.S. had left its mark in the country which, until recently, I loved most in the world. More students were thrown into the van; the beatings were repetitive, continual, and of the kind that suggested that the police thoroughly enjoyed their functions. I protested. "Shut your bloody mouth, or we'll give you such a hell of a hiding that you'll remember it for the rest of your life."

It was not yet over. The police van charged down the side streets. The engines had tremendous acceleration. We lurched wildly round corners. We raced up to the Gare Montparnasse and then down again to the Rue Jacob—it was as though the police vans were mad engines of casual movement, for the students had long ago dispersed; the driver went wherever a sixth sense told him that students might be present, but for the most part his sixth sense was defective. The van was crowded. I sat on the knees of one of the students, a boy studying mathematics at the Sorbonne. I found some cigarettes, gave them to this boy and then asked one of the policemen for a light. He was a pure Daumier character, a brutal Corsican, with heavy jowls and a habit of stroking his truncheon. He said: "You want fire. My God! You'll have fire later." I thought of the S.S., jack-booted in the Hotel Lutetia, and rather ridiculously, because I loved France so much, I wanted to weep.

This was nearly the end. There were no more arrests, though there were a few more mad 60-mile-an-hour drives across the Boulevard. Suddenly we were all marched out into another, larger police van, and taken to the police court facing the Church of St. Sulpice. This time it was like a Rouault painting. The guardroom was filled with brutal, coarse-faced clowns who played dominoes, swore, waited for orders, and refused to answer any questions of the prisoners except with threats. I asked to telephone the British Embassy. The sergeant in charge said: "The telephone doesn't communicate outside," a statement which I have since discovered to be a complete lie. There was no longer physical brutality; but the psychological brutality remained—threats, silence, the long wait before the names and the charges are written in the dossier. When it came to my turn to be examined, I was asked who I was. I said I was a professor, their faces fell, almost on their knees they asked me to leave. There was some satisfaction in knowing that I could immediately telephone the mother of one of the students and explain that he would be late for dinner.

I have still got the kind of headache which I thought only possible after typhus. I can remember the faces of the policemen who threw themselves so viciously at the students; they were the same faces which I saw among the gendarmes in Kunming when my Chinese students were massacred. I have—with very little hope that it will ever be read—written a note of protest to the President of the French Republic. It would be useless to write to the Minister of the Interior, M. Jules Moch, who is cruising in the Mediterranean. I see France now in a different light. It is not, of course, that there are vast forces of police reaction rampant; it is simply that police brutality is allowed to exist, and is defended, and is probably secure, and innocent foreigners may very well find themselves caught up in police vans; the day of the third degree has come in again.

But it must not be allowed to come in. Those of us who once loved France passionately, and still love her, have a right to speak. We cannot love a France where the police are vengeful and where men are at the mercy of arbitrary arrests. We have the right to demand the assurance that France, the most civilised of countries, should never allow the traces of Nazi dominance to survive.

ROBERT PAYNE

Paris, July 3.

CROSS-PURPOSES

I HAD wandered into the goods-yard to talk to railwaymen, and found it unexpectedly depressing. The men were dull, apathetic. There was neither vigorous grievance nor vigorous work. As soon as they had got through a job, loading things on to open trucks, they draped themselves listlessly and separately over sacks, speaking neither to each other nor to me. The more intelligent-looking of them seemed to have decided to be fed up with me for being there anyway. Of course it was hot.

"What about that extry half-pound of cheese?" said at last a paunchy, bedraggled man with mixed-up braces. Others shunted closer.

"Yes, why won't they give us that?" said a thin man, materialising with an air of vague menace, then instantly receding.

"Comp'ny say we should go to the British Restaurant," grumbled the braces. "Your own wife could do more for you than any restaurant . . . speshly with that extry bit of cheese!" Heads shaking, they all vanished again behind sacks, and the shed lapsed into the silence of absolute dead-end.

An hour or so later I was looking out of the window of a signal-box further down the line, by a small country station. The box was quiet except for bells and morse-messages jingling gently like untuned virginals, the country harmonious with summer. Suddenly an express train tore past. There was just time to see the name "Silver Fox" along a streak of blue engine, and the driver leaning from his cab, looking ahead towards London for signals. It seemed impossible to connect that rush of power with the stagnation of the goods-yard, and my thoughts were jolted with a violent sense of cross-purpose.

The signalman, large, pink-cheeked, healthy-looking, rather like a bo'sun, took his responsibilities with great calm, and seemed to feel that he was being paid (Class II, £5 15s. a week) for not doing much. Yet there was a constant flow of trains, and he was kept busy with bells and levers. Two "roads" (sets of rails) ran between a tunnel at one end of the station and a viaduct beyond the other end—a distance of perhaps a mile—but they widened to four beyond these, and that set problems of "regulating" (e.g., whether a goods-train could be allowed to travel "fast road" if an express was late).

"You should see the power-box at King's Cross!" he said. "I wouldn't care to go there now I'm in my sixties."

"I suppose the pleasure is being your own master?"

". . . and getting the traffic through!" he said. "Driver can't see a thing coming through that tunnel when it's full of smoke. He depends on your signals. He's got to have faith. It's the faith between one person and another. Railways are a family." He'd been writing in his ledger when he said this, and glanced up quickly: "I'm a bit old-fashioned."

These remarks, and I heard others of the same sort, made some things clearer. The railwaymen are like a family, despite all the violent discrepancies of work and character: a family of 634,000 people. Inarticulate and clannish, at cross-purposes with each other and with the world, they show the symptoms of family life, as well in their friendships as in their quarrels. Dis-

persed over 51,623 miles of track, separated by rigid demarcation of jobs and grades, working often in responsible and concentrated isolation, they value and try to keep alive the human currents passing along the network, and are troubled by new arrangements, if these augment the impersonal, the official, the mechanical. They need to talk and gather. One of the most striking things about the National Union of Railwaymen is the strong fabric of friendly social life, which it incidentally sustains. The "Brothers" (they are peculiarly fond of the old term) are constantly organising jubilees and celebrations, in places great and small. "Brother Smith," when he retires full of years and prestige, is quite likely to be presented with a medallion, specially struck, or an illuminated address. The Union's Orphan Fund, eighty-year old relic of darker times, still gives its Good Friday teas, seaside holidays, and Christmas treats.

The signalman used the word "railway-minded," regretting the decline of this quality in the younger men. To such as him the railways have been not so much a job as a life. Many of them have been forty or more years in it, and have brothers, fathers, grandfathers who have lasted as long. Land-memories are closer than those of most workers in industry. For instance, the old Great Central Railway used to recruit Lincolnshire farm-labourers, offering them 12s. a week instead of the 11s. they were getting. The country signalman is a local man, with pig and garden perhaps, as well as a member of the vast rail family. Enjoying the life, contented with a little, they cherished their unambitious continuity, together with a very old-fashioned spirit, such as you find ensconced in the pages of Mr. G. W. Alcock's *Fifty Years of Railway Trade Unionism*. That book stopped at 1922. Yet to-day, at Unity House, the Union's headquarters in the Euston Road, one is still struck by the air of sombre, almost funereal respectability. The bronze plaques, the brass and the oak, the mosaic tiles and stained glass, the rows of framed and faded portrait-photographs of past presidents and secretaries with their heavy moustaches, all are eloquent of the *then* surviving into the *now*. A passenger may feel it most when he passes beneath the "bricky towers" of St. Pancras and King's Cross.

Accustomed to creak along with secretive efficiency, carrying all its barnacles on its back, this old-fashioned family apparatus had to adjust itself, at the beginning of last year, to a sort of second marriage, in the form of nationalisation, and a new stepmother, controlling purse and last word, in the persons of the Railway Executive. The Executive are a "functional" body, charged to produce an "efficient and economical service." Of nine members, six are technicians, and they naturally faced their problems in the spirit of technicians. The problems were vast. The war had dealt fearful blows, and the entire machine was clogged with use and decrepitude. It would cost £180,000,000 to make good the wear and tear. Lack of steel was a problem, and so was lack of money: win, lose or draw, the railways must find £30,000,000 a year for ex-stockholders. Passenger and freight traffic (except in coal and other minerals) both fell away from 1947 to 1948, and extra revenue from increased charges fell short of expectations by £30,000,000. The average age of coaches was 21 years, as against 18 years in 1939, and there were 12,000 coaches (21.5 per cent. of total stock) over 35 years old. In February, 1948, about 37 per cent. of express and 59 per cent. of ordinary trains were running to time.

Attacking decayed corners briskly, the Executive could show some cleaned patches by the end of their first year. More trains and better running times. An improved weekly output of repairs, and not quite so many waggons and coaches waiting their turn in the repair sheds. In August, 1948, there were 11.25 per cent. waiting, an improvement from 14.5 per cent. in December, 1947. (It used to be 6 per cent. before the war.) Technically, these were real beginnings. Then suddenly, not more than a few weeks ago, there was a loud and dreadful knocking, as of a big-end going. Smouldering family quarrels burst to the surface, they became noisy, public, and inconvenient. Trains and technicians were halted in their tracks, ambitious plans pushed back into drawers. The apparatus refused to stand any more of that sort of adjustment. "Go slow!" it groaned. "Work to rule!"

GILES ROMILLY

(To be concluded)

LIBERAL CANADA

(BY A CORRESPONDENT)

THE Liberal sweep in the Canadian elections was a triumph for Mr. Mackenzie King's strategy. Nine years ago he plucked shy, conservative Louis St. Laurent from his quiet corporation law office in Quebec City, to make him Minister of Justice, then Minister of External Affairs, and finally Prime Minister. He built him into a national figure, then an international one—a hard job with the stubborn clay he had chosen. This year it was clear to all, as it had long been to the old master, that only a French Canadian, one acceptable to the Church, could beat Premier Duplessis' machine in Quebec and so keep all Canada secure for the Liberals. Mr. King has never wavered in his belief that Canada cannot be divided, that Quebec is the cornerstone of Liberal power. St. Laurent was fashioned, ready at hand. However much the nationalists distrust him, few would vote against "one of ours."

The rumour persists, in spite of denials, that in a year or two St. Laurent, who is already 67, will resign, and that L. B. Pearson, Minister of External Affairs, will become Prime Minister by party convention vote, without having to face the electorate until he has been in office for some time. Now it is possible that Mr. Pearson could win as Liberal leader, but it is far from sure that he could carry Quebec. Mr. King takes no chances.

The election was called rather suddenly, presumably to get in ahead of the gathering storm of unemployment and to give the Progressive-Conservatives little time to marshal their forces. They showed no signs of having forces to marshal. Mr. Drew, the Tory leader and Premier of Ontario, demonstrated his personal unpopularity in Ontario and the pictures taken of him with Premier Duplessis of Quebec did him no good in the West. They did him no good in Quebec either, judging by the results. He delivered himself of many sentiments displaying deep political insight, such as "Only the dissatisfied turn to Communism," but the populace was bored. He will lead an opposition in the Commons diminished from 69 to 42. Already it is predicted that if his party rallies enough to fight another election, it will turn to John Diefenbaker of Saskatchewan for leadership. Mr. Diefenbaker has shown a good deal of concern for civil rights in Canada; he would have no deals with Duplessis.

The Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth Federation attributes its disaster—a drop from 28 seats to 10—to the dissident groups in British Columbia, where its present plight was forecast by defeat in the Provincial elections a few weeks ago. But there are rebellious groups in Manitoba and Saskatchewan too, where even Provincial M.P.'s have been protesting against the party's endorsement of the Atlantic Pact and criticising the C.C.F. Saskatchewan Government's deals with U.S. oil trusts. There are many voices calling for the party to return to its advocacy of socialism. A purge of all the rebels might leave the party consisting of little but its national executive. Most voters saw little difference between C.C.F. and Liberals, so chose the latter to make sure of keeping Drew out, like the Americans who voted to keep Dewey out. The two parties have been making friendly gestures to each other. The Minister of Defence, Mr. Claxton, spoke affectionately of the C.C.F. as "Liberals in a hurry." The belief was widespread that if the Liberals did not get a majority they might form a coalition with the C.C.F. Since their landslide victory, they need no such support. The C.C.F. is out in the cold, without even the balm of knowing a brave cause was bravely lost.

In Quebec, the Progressive-Conservatives have had their bluff called. The nationalists who were expected to support them are now calling for a new Provincial party to oppose both Duplessis and the Liberals, a Social Christian party that would stand for a Republic of Canada. They may not get just that, but there will certainly be a new line-up of forces. The appointment of Adelard Godbout, former Premier of Quebec, to the Dominion Senate opens the way for a thorough reorganization of the Quebec Liberal Party, always a distinct group. Mr. Godbout has been out of a job since his defeat in the Provincial contest last year. He is now provided for, and a more vigorous French Canadian will be able to take his place at the head of the party which during the past year has been languidly led by an English Canadian lawyer.

The result is a hard blow to Mr. Duplessis' prestige. Political bosses can't afford such defeats. While he himself did not campaign, his Ministers and Deputies worked hard for the Progressive-Conservative candidates, and his whole machine was behind them, with one exception. In Richelieu-Vercheres, though Adrien Arcand, leader of the Fascist National Unity Party, and former editor of a Duplessis newspaper, was beaten, he received some 5,000 votes. The Progressive-Conservative man had about 400. It is clear which candidate got the votes of the Duplessis machine. No one regrets the defeat of Ludger Dionne, one of the 5 Liberals out of 73 who lost in Quebec. He is the M.P. who was bitterly criticised for importing Polish girl D.P.s from Europe for jobs in his textile mill, at wages the French Canadian girls wouldn't work for. Beauce would have no more of him, another sign of Quebec's increasing consciousness of labour's importance.

It was sheer good luck for the Liberals, which even Mackenzie King could not have foreseen, that the Duplessis administration should have been so discredited and become so unpopular this spring on account of the brutal behaviour of the Provincial Police in the Asbestos strike. This strike of the Catholic Syndicates against the Johns-Manville Co. is still going on. The Catholic clergy, anxiously supporting the strike, and feeling that the interests of the Church in Canada are in no wise jeopardized by Louis St. Laurent's tenure of the Prime Ministership, no longer aid Duplessis. The Province has swung back to its Liberal allegiance, traditional since Laurier's day.

Mayor Camillien Houde, running as an independent in Papineau, a Montreal working-class constituency, was the only non-Liberal elected in the city. On election night a crowd waited before his headquarters, expecting the jovial

and witty remarks for which the Mayor is famous. Instead they heard one of the bitterest political speeches ever made. He reminded them that St. Laurent had sent him to a concentration camp and kept him there through the war years, because he had advised his supporters not to register for national service; he said the Liberals had wanted to beat him more than any other of their opponents. He told the silent, astonished people that St. Laurent was ready to sell the interests of all his compatriots, that under his regime French Canadians will lose all they have gained at Ottawa, that they will be submerged under a flood of foreigners. "In 1938, I predicted war, and I told you you would be dragged into conscription. There can be another war, and this time it will be worse. For now you cannot depend on their promises; this time they have made none. They will do with you whatever they please."

Montreal, July 1st.

SO THEY SAY . . .

IT is a pity that the most interesting evidence of all was not available for inclusion in the Royal Commission's Report on the Press—Fleet Street's handling of the Report itself. The *Daily Worker*, for once, produced the most accurate headline of the day (June 30): PRESS REPORT DELIGHTS PROPRIETORS. But, although the newspaper-reading public might not have realised it, there was a little more to the Report than simply a dispelling, in the words of the *Daily Graphic*, of the "foul miasma of suspicion." In addition to Mr. Silverman's detailed investigation into the contents of newspapers (Appendix VII), two complete chapters were devoted to "The Performance of the Press." Much of this was, to quote the *Observer*, "unfavourable to our industry or profession." The Commission detailed 18 serious cases of distortion due to personal or political bias, naming the newspapers concerned in each. How did the papers in question deal with these chapters?

The *Observer*, criticised for an untrue version of a meeting of the Commission itself, printed the stricture in full, editorially accepted the criticism with dignity, and made no attempt to wriggle. The *Daily Mail*, mentioned in five cases (two or which concern it alone), printed in full the Commission's comments ("careless journalism . . . recklessness in the use of figures," etc.), and editorially agreed that "there is some bias in reporting," but justified it by adding that "this is a partisan country, and the defects of the free Press reflect the defects of our political system and form of society . . ."

The *Daily Express* was mentioned unfavourably in six cases, in three of which it was the sole paper concerned. Its treatment of a speech by Secretary of State George Marshall, for example, was decribed as "selection, amounting virtually to suppression . . . a travesty . . . a very important piece of news . . . gravely distorted in order to prevent it from telling against a line of policy pursued by the paper's principal proprietor." What was the *Express's* reply? "In this case, singled out (*sic*) from all the countless editions and issues of the paper over several years, the Royal Commission is wrong . . ."

The *Daily Graphic* figured prominently in five cases, its particular distinction being its report of Mr. Shinwell's cocktail party for 1,000 guests, with "experts out searching in London for whisky, port and sherry," to celebrate the taking over of the coal industry. "Excessive political bias," commented the Commission, and, about another *Graphic* story, "extreme and dishonest . . . imaginative reporting." The *Graphic* in its "full summary" reported simply that "many newspapers, including the *Daily Graphic*, are criticised for their handling of isolated matters," and in its editorial ("Truth Will Out") considered it "gratifying" that the vindication of the press "applies in particular to the Kemsley group . . ."

The *Daily Worker*, criticised in three cases, including Greece and the Marshall Plan, hit back: "It is significant that the Commission should have taken us up on foreign affairs while blandly stating that foreign affairs . . . were excluded from their research into the Press because of the difficulty of ascertaining the facts of a given situation."

The *Daily Telegraph* (this was Lord Camrose in person) put up an oblique defence by complaining about the method of "selective quotation" from the *Telegraph* used by the Commission. Of the national daily press, in fact (not counting *The Times*), only the *News Chronicle* could honestly say, as it did in its editorial, that "the references which the Commission have made to this newspaper have been fair and friendly—even approving."

Tailpiece

Daily Express, June 30, p. 1:

THE PRESS IS VINDICATED.

And in the next column:

QUEEN MARY SEES GUSSIE—NO LACE.

AUTOLYCUS

LICENCE TO FARM

THOSE going into farming at the present time can be divided roughly into three categories—the wealthy, retiring business man, the young enthusiast whose capital and knowledge is limited, and the country-bred farmer's son or farm worker who wants to make an independent start. Few town folk realise the difference in opportunity between the man who has sufficient capital, both to purchase his property and live and dead stock, and the man who has sufficient to stock a farm, but not enough to buy a property. Anyone who is in a position to purchase his own property can do so, and start "farming," irrespective of his knowledge of husbandry or rural life. There is no power to prevent him from buying fifty to a thousand acres of land wherever his fancy may rest. He who is forced through lack of capital to rent a farm often has to undergo a far more detailed examination, especially if he is proposing to become a tenant of a good landlord. In the purchaser, the only attribute required is money. The tenant has to produce references from people of considerable agricultural weight and, if he has farmed before, one from the County Executive Officer of his district. These recommendations are to satisfy his future landlord and the County Agricultural Committee that he is a capable and suitable person to farm land according to the recognised rules of good husbandry.

The recent Agricultural Bill has stopped one side of land speculation, but from only one point of view. No longer can one purchase a well-sited piece of agricultural land and expect to sell it later on at a vast profit as a building or development site. So far, there has been no attempt to control or prevent the wrong sort of person from buying land which they may mis-use and rape, utilising stored fertility, and then resell. Has anyone the right to mutilate and abuse, through ignorance or selfishness, any plot of English earth which, under proper management, could produce more fruitfully? Anyone proposing to start farming, either as a tenant or landlord, should be forced to undergo examination by a board of local practical farmers appointed from the district in which he proposes to settle. He should personally satisfy them that he has both the knowledge, ability and necessary working capital to farm his holding at a high and efficient rate of production.

During the war great strides were made in this direction; but, since then, progress has been seriously retarded. "Controls" and "Direction Orders" have disappeared, in the interests, we are told, of Democracy—the assumption being that the farmer is some sort of cross-bred Archangel who is going to respond more enthusiastically to a national need if subjected to gentle persuasion! Agricultural Advisory Officers are available to help and advise all and sundry, but they are endowed with no powers to see that their advice is carried out. Intolerably bad farming continues, especially in the Western districts. Acres and acres of grassland are crying out for lime, and many worn-out pastures for the plough. Dirty and unproductive arable land abounds and very little is being done about it. As a practical farmer myself, I feel that more controls and not less are the answer.

Luckily, the present inflated value of property has to some degree prevented untrained ex-Service people from throwing all their war gratuity into some small holding as they did after the 1914 war. They are also restricted by shortage of animal feeding stuffs. Nevertheless, there are very many young men from all spheres of rural life longing to make a start at farming—men whose qualifications, if given a chance, could support themselves and their families, as well as producing a maximum of food. Can we as a nation afford to allow these retiring, wealthy business men to come out of towns and act as the worst rural parasites with which the countryman has to cope? They have been buying not only farms but dilapidated cottages which should have housed land workers, and have been turning them into desirable dwellings either for themselves or to be sold profitably to their week-end visiting friends.

The Land Settlement Association is doing fine work to help those with limited capital to get their feet on a few acres; they see that the right sort of man has this opportunity, and that the holding is efficiently farmed. Would it not be in the national interest that some form of control should be introduced to see that the right man has a prior chance to any available farms over the investor or "hobby farmer"? For, when these wealthy, so-called "farmers" settle in the country, their main advantage to the farming community is that they construct luxurious buildings to house their livestock; after their capital has been exhausted owing to "ill-luck," the improvements may be enjoyed by a more practical man.

Yet, to-day, film stars and stage artistes are buying farms, and recently, in one of our more "progressive" daily papers, was depicted the figure of a "glorious blonde," incongruously clad in gay raiment, seated languorously on a little three-legged stool, and with smiling ease milking an apparently appreciative cow! Is any reasonably intelligent member of the community supposed to regard this sort of thing as an all-out national effort to improve the lot of the long-suffering housewife by supplying her with more and better food? Even the "local" is raided at week-ends by decorative species of both sexes, gaily demanding cocktails, and attempting a patronising conversation with the owners of clay pipes and pints of mild and bitter.

Let it be remembered that the successful farmer to-day is no longer the picturesque, legendary type, with dung-covered boots and trousers and a wisp of hay protruding from his lips. He is a man with a keen business sense, whose knowledge has to be extensive. He must be, for example, a bit of a chemist, veterinary

surgeon, carpenter, mechanic, secretary (if he cannot afford one of his own) and above all, a man with a deep insight and understanding of rural men and women, whom he has grown to respect as the salt of the earth. It would be laughable to suggest to any farmer that on his retirement he should try his hand as a managing director of a drapery store or small tool factory. Yet many of those who have held these positions are blithely buying up strips of our precious agricultural land, quite sincerely imagining that because of their past business experience they are far more likely to make a success of "this farming business" than the ignorant and unbusinesslike fellow who has the misfortune to be their neighbour. The error is theirs, the loss the country's.

B. W. LLOYD VEYSEY

LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

Isle of Britain.

. . . A desperately busy week in London, for I am now concerned in the production of a play, a film, an opera. I pretend to grumble about all this work coming at once, but secretly I delight in it and see myself as a man successfully (I hope) juggling with an orange, a top hat and a chair. Every day it has been hot, which meant that I went running round sweating like a bull. But I found myself regarding London with a friendlier eye. This is a city that improves after being popped into the oven. Its people look more relaxed and companionable, lolling about on any bit of turf, slipping in and out of the cool caverns of the pubs. There were whispers of a possible crisis, a Dunkirk among the dollars, and this rumour of Doomsday, which we have known before, seemed to be perfectly in accord, perhaps through association, with the sudden heat, the glare and the deep shadows of the streets, the momentarily relaxed crowds in squares and parks. I have never understood why our politicians are so frightened of announcing a crisis. If I were Prime Minister I would be tempted to invent crises, and our backs would be for ever against the wall. When I was a small boy one of our favourite pastimes was enacting "Major Wilson's Last Stand." And the English are Major Wilsons to a man. Because we are so undramatic in our ordinary behaviour, we have an unconscious self that screams for drama, for towering heroic attitudes, for Last Stands and All Is Lost Save Honour. Our real national heroes are never quietly efficient successful men but glorious failures, tragic blunderers, poets in action. The worst slogan ever offered to the English people was "Safety First!" Most of the English I know, old or young, have no deep-seated craving for a drab security stretching from the cradle to the grave, for the minor Civil Servant's idea of life, and, I believe, would uproariously welcome the statesman who cried: "We will now, with fantastic self-sacrifice, Attempt the Impossible." Cripps has the courage and moral height but lacks the gleam of sympathy, the glitter of romance. Churchill has—or had—the imagination, the touch of devilment, but is now too solidly rooted in the wrong camp, among the grumbling old women who cannot get servants and the selfish old buffers who would not care a rap if half our population North of the Trent were out of work.

Writing an introduction, a few days ago, to my "English Journey," I was moved to reflect how few people in the South of this land know what life between the wars was like in the North. They cannot imagine what it is to live in an industrial town, built to offer a man work and little else, and then find there is no work for you to do. They can form no mental picture of the frustration, the degradation, the sense of ultimate defeat, that comes from long unemployment in an industrial area. But though some of us grumble as long and loud now as the rest, we cannot forget the horrible England of the dole or remove our contempt from the men in power who regarded this nightmare waste of humanity with complacency. We had labour and material to spare then, and what did we do with them? Now we are paying a heavy price for old mistakes.

Nevertheless, the problem of "equality" worries me. I read: "The time has come for us as a nation to go further still on the road to equality." Fair enough, so far as it goes. But what exactly is this "equality" towards which we should be travelling? We should recognise of course that all human beings feel equally important to themselves, that all persons are persons and never things, that certain basic rights belong to human beings just because they are human beings, whether they happen to be tall, short, clever, stupid, pink, yellow or black. But this positive idea of equality does not take us very far—though we have yet to accept those basic rights—and meanwhile there are signs that the negative idea of equality is having far more influence. This idea seems to me to be based not on sympathy but on envy, when it is the expression of a twisted mentality, or on a dreary pendantry. When I see it at work I remember Blake's: "One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression." And there is too much of this oppression about, nowadays. There are too many people who say in effect: "I have no sailing boat, therefore you must have no sailing boat. If everybody cannot have a grand piano, then nobody should have a grand piano. If my child does not want to learn ballet dancing, why should your child be taught it?" And somewhere at the end of this is an appalling vista of flatness and dreariness, compared with which a society composed of arrogant dukes and servile peasants, mad millionaires and ragged match-sellers, would be a treat. Most people in this country take pleasure in varied styles of living and understand instinctively that persons are widely different in their natures and demands on life. So they have little sympathy with this equalitarian-Procrustes attitude of mind; but it is, I fancy, common among certain narrow types of politicians and their officials, who dislike personalities richer, deeper or merely more eccentric than their own. And at times, I suspect, they legislate so carefully for the ox in order to get at and oppress the lion. You and I, of course, are lions.

Have you seen Flaherty's *Louisiana Story*? It is not well-shaped and is much too fragmentary, but the early shots of the boy and the swamp and the forest are like clear glimpses of a magical world. Here the film stands up as an art form. On the same programme was one of our official propaganda films about air travel It paid a handsome and well deserved compliment to the staffs of our air lines for their patience and courtesy, but at the same time it took considerable pains to present air travellers as a bunch of nervous, pestering half-wits. And if the film was designed to persuade more of us to travel by air, then clearly it is not likely to succeed, for few of us after seeing it would feel encouraged to make one of yet another party of these chattering whining nuisances. "Never mind about me," we feel like saying. "I'll go by rail and ship and put no further strain on your patience."

I like the notion, put forward by one of your journalists, for a "Leave Us Alone Week," in which we all stop exhorting and giving advice to each other. (Yes, me too). But a week is not long enough. Why not three months? Twelve weeks without propaganda from anybody. Now I am told that we spend over sixteen million pounds a year on our combined information and propaganda services. If we could only save a quarter of that, during these three months, what fun we could have with that four million pounds! We could subsidise symphony orchestras, opera and ballet companies, several first-class dramatic repertory companies, art exhibitions, and still have some money left over for fireworks. And there would be a gain rather than a loss in our national prestige. Bravo the British—for deciding to enjoy themselves for three months and to leave other people alone! What a great nation! Let us—the others would say—have a look at them; let us buy the goods of these jolly independent folk; let us imitate them. And then very soon the air would be filled with music instead of stale lies; and our wastepaper baskets would no longer be cluttered up with copies of the *Ruritanian News* and the *Illyrian Gazette*.

Blessings upon you for the corncob pipes, which are as light and sweet-smoking as I remembered them as being! My only criticism is that towards the end of a pipeful they are often too hot, probably because they were originally devised for tobacco broader in cut and slower-burning than ours. Every time I light one of these corncobs there is a shift in my *persona*, and I see myself as a homely philosopher and rustic wit, drawling sagaciously between puffs. I suppose the fully adult male, grown-up for good and all, leaves this kind of private play acting to the women and children, never performing for himself except in the one constant portentous role of mature manhood. But the women and children, though largely living in territory occupied by armies of these males, have more fun. And I am with them, lighting your corncobs slowly and with a sort of rural slyness, about to make some pawky observation completely in corncob character—enjoying *myself*.

Throughout this hot spell in London I have slept badly, so that the nights seemed longer and more exhausting than the days. I am not, as you know, a worrying type; and I learnt long ago to stop thinking about work as soon as I put myself between the sheets. Stomach? Well, one night I supped late and heavily with an actor friend; but the next night I dined early and ate very little; and the night after that I dined at the usual time and ate the usual amount; and each night I slept badly. Any suggestions? No tricks demanding concentration will do as they make me more wakeful. I know the usual kinds of dope. Is there anything else? I am not fussy about missing a few hours sleep, but when I have a heavy programme of work for several days on end, I dislike wasting energy tossing and turning and thumping my pillow. What do you suggest?

J. B. PRIESTLEY

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The New Statesman" of July, 1924

No Trains on Sunday?

Both the Miners' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen have been holding their Annual Conferences this week. There is discontent in the ranks of both bodies, and the "forward" elements have had a good deal to say... Mr. Tom Shaw has apparently refused to accede to the N.U.R. demands [on Sunday overtime rates] and Mr. Cramp threatens him in return that the railwaymen will refuse to work on Sunday. This is an absurd situation. We do not, of course, seriously suppose that we are going to lose our Sunday trains; a way out of the difficulty will have to be found.

The Arts and Entertainment

THEATRE GROUPS

THOSE who believe the future prosperity of the theatre to depend upon "groups" and "teams" rather than upon "commercial" managements and "stars," will be heartened by the new play, *This Walking Shadow*, to be seen at the Playhouse. This is a theatrically interesting Scots piece, acted by what appears to be the same company as appeared lately under the name Glasgow Unity. But the unregenerate, still demanding commerce and stars, will notice that Mr. Jack Hylton is one of the backers of the venture and that Miss Freda Jackson has the big billing.

I call this a theatrically interesting piece because, dramatically, the potentialities are more evident than the achievement: the production and the acting are much better than the play, though this does show in its author, Mr. Benedick Scott, considerable promise. The dialogue is smooth, the narrative clear and well laid out; it is the stuff and texture of both that is altogether too threadbare. The scene is laid in a small court or square in a small Scottish town, well suggested by Mr. Tom Macdonald's set. What life may be like there is shown us very convincingly from the outside by a series of selected touches. At dusk a pair of lovers stroll across under the lamplight; a group of raucous youths gather at the corner, tossing pennies, swinging from the lamp-posts, showing off their loutishness: they scatter at the copper's approach; one person in a cloth cap whistles at another in a skirt and jumper. Life here is seldom private: at some window of each house a corner of the lace curtains is being pulled back, and a pair of inquisitive eyes are on the watch for tit-bits. In the morning, while rugs are being shaken, steps brushed down, shopping bags brought out, the women pause and natter to each other in a sort of crones' chorus.

Thus the feel of "the vennel" is vividly conveyed to us. It comes alive: we are drawn into it. But, alas, once we are there we come up against the author's defect. He cannot draw characters, and this makes his plot look jejune. It is the story of a young man coming back from the big city after two years' absence, during which he has remained somewhat surprisingly green. For he finds himself pursued by two seducers, one male and one female, and though he eludes the first comparatively easily, he only just escapes the consequences of succumbing to the second. Novelette-ish, all of this. It produces a number of well built up clashes and Mr. Robert Mitchell's expert producing makes the very best of them. But they don't hold us: they don't draw us in, for the author hasn't yet developed the capacity to feel his characters from the inside. They are not human beings, they are hardly even types, except in so far as the clever actors make them so. They are all (even the four gossips) undifferentiated dummies, and it isn't possible to take an interest in the doings of undifferentiated dummies. I wonder whether some musty ideological notions aren't at the back of this. There seem to be two styles of work at odds here. When producer and author work together in staging a stylised vision of vennel life, the picture is imaginative and telling. But a nagging social conscience—is it?—keeps putting the brakes on the fancy and jerking us back to the factual; and the final result is neither the social realism of, say, *The Gorbals Story*, nor the poetic realism which some of the best moments in the play suggest it might have achieved. It is for these moments that the play is valuable and for the high level of acting that this group maintained. I must particularly mention Jack Stewart as the male seducer, Mr. Roddy Macmillan as the innocent, and Miss Freda Jackson's loyal playing in with the others.

A different kind of group achievement is shown by the Nottingham Theatre Trust's *Othello* in the repertory festival at the Embassy. When I remember the kind of Shakespearean performances that one saw in the provinces or at schools twenty-five years ago, I am astonished at the high level that is now reached. One hopes that Nottingham is no less astonished and is as responsive as it should be grateful. From a fortnightly rep. one does not expect a highly polished and exact performance. The difficulties of casting and the short rehearsal time alone would preclude that. But equally one might not expect so direct and sensitive a reading, so high a degree of consistency in the cast, such admirable lighting and effective sets. A young actor, Mr. Michael Aldridge, made a brave effort with Othello. He starts with the advantage of a good presence and a rich bass voice, and he uses both well in repose. If he can learn to act, too, with his body, his limbs, his eyes and his hands, he may well go far. Mr. George Hagen's Iago may be a little old-fashioned, but one feels absolutely safe with him and his performance gives a solid centre to the play. The standard of verse-speaking was refreshingly high. Next week the Bristol Old Vic Company will be giving a new play by Mr. Peter Watling, the author of the recently successful *Rain on the Just*.

T. C. WORSLEY

JOHN CRAXTON

LIKE the huge limbs of a banyan tree, the various manners of Picasso shade contemporary painting, which is a forest of influences. The branches bend to the ground, take root and form new stocks. Why should not an artist remain a subsidiary limb feeding off a central trunk? After all, we cannot expect every young painter to evolve a clearly defined and individual style before the age of thirty. It is natural to borrow from one's great contemporaries; but an artist must be careful to borrow only what can do him good and what is complementary to his own talents. He must not copy technical mannerisms without appreciating the inner significance, and must maintain his own spiritual distance which is his individuality. Here a lesson can be learnt from Picasso who showed how to be influenced successfully and honourably. Picasso assimilated and developed, he never merely copied. He took no mannerisms from Toulouse-Lautrec, only a way of looking at life. He preoccupied himself with the classical essence of Ingres, not with his technically accomplished shell. He never assumed an eye-catching, outward style, because he realised a far more striking one would automatically develop as the result of a complete understanding within.

John Craxton would appear to be entirely preoccupied with forming a mannerist facade, instead of discovering an inner *mystique;* his case is typical of so many other painters to-day. It is their misfortune to live during a period when there is no recognised traditional idiom. They have no choice but to fend for themselves, whether they know how to or not. So they feel that above all else they must equip themselves with a style; they must achieve a handwriting so unmistakable that people will immediately recognise it. At the same time they feel the style fabricated must be contemporary. They dress up in other people's clothes in order to appear up to date and interesting. They copy, say, Braque's convention for a table leg, or Juan Gris' for a mandolin; they take a little bit from here and something more from there, and they glue all together with a few sticky tricks of their own. Thus they give the impression of understanding the idiom of modern painting, but not its spirit.

John Craxton's new pictures, exhibited at the London Gallery, are enlivened with motifs and technical mannerisms from El Greco (No. 5), from the Picasso lithographs (the girl's head in Nos. 17 and 18), from the Picasso Antipolis pictures (the sleeping fisherman, No. 4), from Lucien Freud (Nos. 23, 29 and 36), and from Chagall (No. 57). None of these borrowings has been assimilated into a style. They remain so many distinguishing labels, as do his own mannerisms. Somewhere Picasso has written that whenever he finds a self-conscious trick in his work, he plucks it out; if it has any value, it will be digested and reappear elsewhere of its own accord. Craxton, far from plucking out his mannerisms, has made a cult of them. Also his technique is inadequate; his painting, his drawing, his feeling for form especially let him down, where virtuosity might save him. One of the manners he has borrowed is a sort of neo-cubism, and no idiom requires a more highly developed feeling for form. When Craxton's essays in this *genre* are elaborate they make little sense formally; when simple, they are merely inept and geometrical, rather like Nijinsky's drawings. No, these Greek shepherds, fishermen, girls and goats, are by far the least successful work he has done.

The most adequate work in the whole exhibition is a rather unambitious and quite straightforward drawing (No. 35) of an old man with a beard. The head is nicely done in a good academic way—rather reminiscent of George Richmond. Only where the cubist influence intrudes as in the shoulder on the right does the drawing fall apart and become incoherent, because cubism has been used decoratively and not formally. If only he would leave out these flash, modern mannerisms! This drawing, the most academic in the show, is the only one to provide a firm base for the building up of a sincere and fitting style. It shows a return to the romantic English school of the nineteenth century, which was one of this painter's first public influences. Certainly he appeared to understand and feel happy, cradled in the gentle, formalised romanticism of Samuel Palmer. His work under that influence was promising and pleasant. It is unfortunate that the inordinate success of these early works created quite such a great demand—his pictures were widely exhibited, a monograph was written—for this has resulted in a forcing of his pace out of all proportion to his understanding and equipment.

JOHN RICHARDSON

MUSIC AT CHELTENHAM

THERE was an assertive boisterousness about most of the orchestral music at this summer's Cheltenham Festival which contradicted the well-bred Regency architecture, the leafy gardens and the comfortable squares. The Hallé Orchestra and Mr. Barbirolli were at their most brilliant; but their programmes were not well balanced. No Haydn, no Mozart, no Beethoven, no Schubert; yet any one of these would surely have provided a better contrast to the strenuous contemporary English works than heavily scored symphonies of Schumann, Dvorak and Brahms—not to mention Elgar. Long before we had reached, at the end of four successive evenings, a knock-out virtuoso performance of Elgar's First Symphony, we had begun to feel the need for a music that should be cool, contained, airy, unemphatic—and of unquestionable excellence.

Mr. Barbirolli has many virtues which distinguish him from the ruck of English conductors, and not the least of them is that he is never dull. He believes intensely in what he is doing, and performs it with gusto and passion, like a robust Italian tenor singing an aria by Leoncavallo. Of course he looks after the *pianissimi* too, but his instinct is for vast floods of tone and complicated, stunning climaxes; and it is difficult to avoid the impression that the Cheltenham Selection Committee yielded too often to his predilection for this kind of music in planning the 1949 programmes. There were a few delicately scored novelties or quasi-novelties, but none of them was important. An *English Suite for Strings* by Alec Rowley was in the pastoral style, slightly modal, decidedly derivative, but beautifully written for the medium. More ambitious was a *Symphonic Suite* by Gordon Jacob, which proved to be a symphony without a finale, well-made academic music, ingenious and spirited, but no more. Most charming of the light-weight

novelties was Phyllis Tate's *Saxophone Concerto*, which is about as good as a saxophone concerto can be. Miss Tate exploits, with the charm and light touch of an Ibert, all the qualities of that spiv-like instrument: its irrepressible bounce and its slightly pathetic hankerings after lyrical beauty; the solo was wonderfully played by Michael Krein. Since the Festival also includes a performance of Miss Tate's delicately sensitive *Nocturne for Four Voices*, to words by Sidney Keyes, her contribution has been both welcome and varied.

The dark horse of the 1949 festival was Richard Arnell, who was represented by two major works, his Fourth Symphony, Op. 52, and his Third String Quartet, Op. 41; since Mr. Arnell is only 32, he is evidently a rapid and prolific composer. Though born in London, he has spent most of the last ten years in America, where he has had some success, especially with a Piano Concerto introduced there by Moura Lympany. About two years ago some piano and chamber music of his was played on the Third Programme, and I remember being much struck by a set of piano variations; with its interesting ideas, and its marked clarity and decision of utterance, this piece reminded me a little of recent Hindemith. I should certainly not have guessed that the new symphony came from the same hand, so different and (to me) so much less sympathetic is the world to which it belongs. The first movement opened with some tremendous whacks on the kettle-drum, supposed to be thematic but not very easily apprehensible as such, which introduced long stretches of fairly straightforward harmony, square-cut rhythm and ruthlessly heavy scoring: the composer has a great partiality for high string octaves punctuated by brass barks. After a comfortable, attractive but rather jog-trot slow movement in E flat, the finale swept us back, preliminary drums and all, to the uproar as before: to quote the programme analyst, "then the trumpets begin to pulse and smash everything to a dramatic silence. Out of the pause rises another unison, broad and vital, and at the end comes a rhythmic figure . . . that is to dominate much of the remainder," etc., etc.

I don't mean to contend that music answering to that sort of description might not be noble and imposing, but only to record my impression, at a first hearing, that the assertive virility of Arnell's Fourth Symphony is forced, its tension not so much the inevitable result of a valuable state of mind as an unconscious concession to contemporary aesthetic power-mania, of which the composer himself will doubtless tire in a few years' time. Meanwhile he has the great gifts of fluency and self-confidence: striking ideas occur readily to him (there are plenty in this symphony), and he is never at a loss to invent convincing adventures for them. Sometimes, as in the first movement of his new string quartet, the treatment of the material is beautiful as well as interesting; but he seems to lack as yet, the faculty of self-criticism—I think one would recognise this even without being aware of the formidable total of his compositions. What I should *not* have recognised, though many others claimed to discern it, is the influence of America; most of the American composers we hear over here are *Ecole de Paris*, and have imbibed from Nadia Boulanger, or some other French teacher, a deep respect for sobriety and clarity of texture. No, I fear that this sort of hell-for-leather style—this "let's have plenty of noise, boys, and never mind the cost" is an English characteristic (also an Italian one, though there it takes a different form). It is what spoils so much of Elgar, specially his symphonies, and makes the heavy-weight symphonic poems of Ireland and Bax (which were also represented at Cheltenham) pleasurable to the ear only by fits and starts.

W. H. Reed lets fall somewhere a revealing story of how, when he went to play violin sonatas with Elgar, the composer would say: "Come on, my boy, let's lash into it." One can hardly imagine Debussy or Mahler, Hindemith or Stravinsky, using such a phrase, even in jest. Many of our English composers are still "lashing into it"; but a few of the younger generation have learnt to keep their texture open and their palette clean: among them Alan Rawsthorne, Michael Tippett, Lennox Berkeley, and above all Benjamin Britten. The second week of the Cheltenham Festival, which consists mainly of Britten's chamber operas, will provide a welcome relief to the ear after so much orchestral exaggeration and excess.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE MOVIES

"The Set-up," at the Plaza

DESPITE the recommendation that "it's cooler inside," the past week must have been an empty one for cinemas. By chance, also, it has offered exceedingly little in the form of new entertainment. A sentimental French drama about the Resistance reaches us years too late, having presumably missed its way in some long-forgotten convoy round the Cape; and only Miss Crawford's most devoted fans will have been lured from gardens or the river by the news that her latest *hysterica passio* "casts a scarlet shadow across" the street. It has not been, in fact, at all the week for films.

But there remains the exception. *The Set-Up*, ably directed by Robert Wise, is another of those hard, handsome, bruising little pieces of which Hollywood has sent us a half-dozen brilliant examples in as many months. Literally, in this case, bruising; almost a third of the film takes place in the ring during a four-round bout of unexampled ferocity. Except in *Champion Charlie*—the only film concerned with this topic which hitherto I have found myself enjoying—two men, hardly able to stand, have probably never hit one another quite so hard and often. It is, even by tough standards, a brutal exhibition; but then the whole point of the film is to show-up the brutality of promoters, audience and hangers-on in the lower rungs of prize-fighting. "The March of Time" recently made its report on American professional boxing, and its conclusion seemed to be that of all rackets going by the name of sport, this was the biggest and most glittering, and showed least pity for those it broke.

The Set-Up, then, shows us a last appearance in the evening of a boxer (Robert Ryan), aged thirty-five, fourth on the programme and likely to add one more to his fatal list of defeats. Against a younger opponent he does magnificently to win; and is then beaten up and has his hand smashed by gangsters who have squared, as they think, his defeat. He will open that cigar-store his wife has had her eye on: the evening has begun in a cheap hotel with wrangling on this very point. She wanders about the town in a suicidal state of nerves unable to face the roar of an audience out for blood. The story has no frills; it begins, making its own pace, goes on, and ends; the boxer has only to walk across the street to the hall where he is fighting, and that particular corner of a town, with its fun-land, chop-suey, dance-hall, and shabby populous air of back-entrances is impressed with growing brilliance. Almost more than the hall itself and the packed dressing-room, one remembers the alley where the unlucky winner is set on, among dust bins and to the music from an open door on a fire-escape high above. Photography as well as story has worked towards this climax.

Mr. Robert Ryan gives a performance admirably in character as the declining boxer; as his wife, Miss Audrey Totter, though sincere enough, seems a little miscast. It is, in fact, rather too thin a part. The weakness of the film is that while we feel their situation at times excruciatingly, they themselves are victims rather than individuals. Reality comes from the surroundings, the squalors of provincial touring, the shades of fight or impending collapse in the boxers themselves, and most of all in the sweating, roaring, vindictive crowd. Nothing jovial about them. Are such audiences really more brutal than those of, say, Rowlandson's day? No doubt they have been swelled by the bear-baiting, cock-fighting element for whom now there are no animal jousts; and the chance visitor, the outsider, is far more aware of sadism. "Kill him, kill him!" yells one woman repeatedly. A blind man feels the noise and movement about him and listens to a companion's running commentary. Only the gangster and his moll remain icily detached; *his* moment comes later on when he has his victim spreadeagled by three thugs in an alley.

This is a film with not many consolations for the soft-hearted (though hero and heroine are almost too thinly sympathetic to be true). One takes it for granted that Americans will make such a film well. But compare *The Set-Up* with our own gallant if feeble little effort to pin down dirt-track-racing on the screen!

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

RADIO NOTES

I HAD no space last time to write about the programme *The Question of Coal*, in which Sir Arthur Street, Deputy Chairman of the National Coal Board, spent forty-five minutes dealing with points put to him by men and women variously connected with the industry. It was a more ambitious venture than usual of the Home Service Friday Forum. Stephen Bone, who talked about it in *The Critics* programme, was disappointed, justifiably I think; he found it too official and lifeless, answers hurried and perfunctory, and concluded it had been a waste of the time of busy people, including Sir Arthur. Whose fault? In my opinion, it was clearly the fault of the chairman (name not given, or else I failed to hear the name). He allowed the questioners—none of them professional broadcasters, one a miner's wife who had great difficulty in mastering her thoughts—to ramble on and on, with the result that, towards the end, questions and answers got jammed together like sardines, scamped and uncomfortable. It was indeed a grievous pity, and quite ruinous to what should have been, and showed baffled glimpses of becoming, a first-rate feature.

Defending the programme, one critic (Ivor Brown) pointed out that on occasions like that it is the interest of the subject which we are concerned with, not the question of whether its experts are "good on the air." When that point applies, it surely lays a special onus on the professional to take things in hand firmly. That this can be done was shown, for example, last Saturday, when the canal boatmen defended their preference for the Roses and Castles, with which they have decorated their boats for more than a hundred years, against the new blue-and-gold livery of the Docks and Inland Waterways Executive. The boatmen are not very articulate, they defended their taste with arguments—e.g., "Red, white, and blue's a national emblem, isn't it?"—which had little to do with the case they wished to make, but the programme was spaced and handled better, under the guidance of Mr. Hal Jukes, and we got the flavour of it. The officials came out well, their words and voices defeated one's mean desire to brand them as complacent bureaucrats. But there was a pleasing tinge of the official mind in their contention that surely it was a "sensible compromise" to select "colours which are going to please everybody." And their touching point that blue and gold symbolise "the outdoor life"—blue waters, gold sunshine—seemed a nice flight of official fantasy.

It is possible for broadcasting to err on the side of professionalism. I felt the oppressiveness of this fault in the Third Programme's three features upon *The Technique of Acting*—stage, film, radio—written and produced by Mr. Malcolm Baker-Smith. Surely acting is not so glum an affair? Many interesting and intelligent things were said, by both actors and producers, but all in hats-off tones, as if a hearse was passing. The stage-actors were the heaviest and the most complacent—Hamlet's speech to the players, read by Sir Ralph Richardson and discussed at length, is too hackneyed to make an interesting centre-piece. Felix Aylmer re-phrased the melancholy old joke about the disconsolacy of the film actor

confronted by the "relatively unsympathetic faces of technicians." Stephen Murray marred an interesting survey with the inevitable grave-toned tribute to "the work of Sir Laurence Olivier." Least cheering of all was the remark: "It is my duty to inform you that all that follows has been carefully considered, written down, and rehearsed. It is not spontaneous"—which the layman (anyhow an irritating figure) seemed obliged to make before the beginning of each discussion. One's spirits sank after that. MARK OGILVIE

Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo, at Covent Garden

How odd that people should have taken *Mad Tristan*, the Salvador Dali-Massine-Wagner ballet, which is in London for the first time, so seriously! An eminent conductor is reported to have said that if it was not for his reputation, he would have made a terrible scene. Cries of "Oh!," "Stop it," and 'Ring down the Curtain," were heard on the second night. It is understandable that exception should be taken to the rather silly use of Wagner's music; otherwise the piece is merely a gay, nightmare pantomime, which anyone could take a young niece to see. For Dali has admirably realised the Freudian ideal—bring your complexes out into the open and air them; they will turn out to be quite healthy after all. Even the most morbid of Dali's paranoid symptoms seem jolly. To quote from the synopsis: "Dali sees the whole romantic philosophy of Wagner as an uninterrupted complex of impotence, an exasperating procession of wheelbarrows, heavy with the earth of reality, struggling up toward the inaccessible heaven of the ecstasy of love, at the summit of which there is only a precipice—love in death and death in love." Who could seriously quarrel with such nonsense as this? We have: "the tragic nuptial rites of the praying mantis, in which the female devours the male": a curious female chimera, whose feet are joined by a twisted face: mouldy beggars who wobble, and a bandaged corpse that is lowered on bands past gesticulating arms. The sets, in Dali's recent scent advertisement manner, are slick and extravagant, and surprisingly good theatre. Only the costumes are poor. If this piece ultimately fails, it is the fault of Massine's inappropriate choreography. Occasionally this is elegant, decorative or witty, but mostly it is hackwork in the master's earlier manner. The rather twentyish dance patterns express nothing of the lush Surrealist idiom; they are altogether too crisp, never fluid or sinister enough. Eglevsky danced the heavy part of Tristan beautifully.

"The Mollusc," at the Arts

Intending playwrights might well feel encouraged by a visit to *The Mollusc*. There appears to be nothing in it. Yet, however ill-fed an audience may feel after two short hours, it would probably admit having enjoyed them while they lasted. This audience certainly seemed to—and in 1907, when Hubert Henry Davies's play first appeared, its success was prodigious. It has no Edwardian elegance, however; atmospherically, it verges towards the stodgy, the tedious, the genteel. There are no clever lines, almost no situation. Of the play's four characters, only one *is* a character, in any sense. That is the mollusc herself, a Mrs. Baxter, who puts out a great deal of energy in the protecting of her own idleness. "There is nothing a mollusc enjoys more than lying in bed feeling strong enough to get up." Here we stumble upon the little play's secret. Some genuine observation has been applied to the portrayal of this character, and it is surely nonsense to pretend that the conception is dated. There are dateless elements of molluscry in everyone. On the stage, thus isolated and personified, the idea is funny, and sustains its funniness without epigrammatic brilliance. It lends itself to "business" or arranging of footstools and cushions, contriving of swoons and headaches, the innumerable miniature but stubborn artifices of molluscry—which keep one gently amused. Miss Vivienne Bennett makes the most of all this, and gets through the part with sly, reserved conviction. She is very well supported by Mr. Patrick Waddington, Miss Jenny Laird, and Mr. Gordon Bell, who at last prise her out of a few well-contested positions. Miss Joan Grinstead's production is simple and adequate.

Correspondence

WAGES AND PRICES

SIR,—No one would question the skill of Sir Stafford Cripps' advocacy in pleading that the workers cannot possibly get a larger slice of the national cake than they do now. But some of the arguments he used to support his case at Blackpool really do not deserve to be called "scrupulous" or "honest" (to quote your contributor).

For example, Cripps told the Labour Party Conference that the White Paper showed wages had risen 12½ per cent. from 1947 to 1948. Since prices had risen only 7 per cent. this was "a clear and distinct gain to the wage-earner."

Cripps omitted to mention, however, that in the same period, there was a *fall* of £11 million in the pay and allowances of the Armed Forces, because of demobilisation. Comparing June 1948 with June 1947, there were 414,000 *more* workers earning wages, and 465,000 *less* in the Forces earning pay and allowances.

If wages and Forces pay are taken together—as they should be to get comparable figures—it will be found that the rise from 1947 to 1948 is only 8 per cent.—roughly the same as the rise in the cost of living.

Again, Cripps said at Blackpool that distributed profits in 1948 were less than in 1947. This result is arrived at by excluding the compensation payments to shareholders in nationalised industries—which are, of course, simply a continuation of profits. To quote the White Paper itself (Cmd. 7649, p. 10):

> If distributions of interest by the newly nationalised industries are added, it will be found that the total amount distributed by corporate enterprises increased by about £30 millions in 1948.

Presumably Sir Stafford has studied the White Paper with some care, and it is difficult to believe that these are merely slipshod statements.

The effect of this kind of thing on audiences in the Labour movement is a mixed one. Some trade unionists, no doubt, are dazzled by the speaker's reputation for learning and honesty. But others flatly reject statistical arguments which, though difficult to refute impromptu, plainly conflict with everyday experience of wealth and poverty.

99 Haverstock Hill, N.W.3. MARGOT HEINEMANN

OVER-PRESCRIBING

SIR,—There is an aspect of the working of the Health Act that I have not seen mentioned, and that, I think, may account for the increase in prescriptions, etc., if there are many doctors like mine. He told me from the first that he was out to "crab the Act," and to that end persuades all his patients to have as much medicine as possible. When I called for very strong sleeping tablets for a relation, he tried to persuade me to have a supply for myself. When I mentioned having bought some powders, myself, he said: "Never do that, and come to me for everything, even if it's only a little cotton wool." When writing the prescription for powders, he gloated: "That sets them back another 7s. 3d.!" When a man goes for anything, he says: "Isn't your wife needing anything? Wouldn't she like so-and-so?" A neighbour went for medicine for her son's whooping cough, and he said: "How are *you?* You must need a tonic, being up so much at nights?" She said: "No thank you, Doctor, I'm fine!" But he said: "But it may get you down, I will give you a tonic just in case, and come if you need more."

I could give dozens of similar examples from my own knowledge. As my father was a G.P. and not a believer in much medicine, I am interested in these matters. NURSE

DETERMINISM

SIR,—That a scientist of Dr. Bronowski's standing could be under-informed about physical determinism is, of course, unthinkable. Yet in discussing Professor Max Born's new book he is clearly convinced that the principle of limited certainty still holds the field. Perhaps then it is I who am out of date in thinking that this is now discredited by the realisation

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that the problem of reconciling strict determinism with the operation of free-will was essentially a linguistic difficulty, concerned with the ambiguous use of the word "determine."

If I may put the case in my own way, I would say that whether we are considering "this marriage or that," the spin of a coin, or any other event that appears to depend on an element of chance, our inability to predict the result is simply due to our ignorance of most of the many factors contributing to that result. The proposition about the behaviour of any particular electron is no exception to this, but is rather confused by the additional problem of identifying even the subject of the inquiry. Of course, there is a range of events the immediate causes of which we do know enough about to be able to predict the result with all the accuracy required in human affairs, although we never know all the causes even in a carefully controlled physical demonstration. But this "ignorance" is only uncertainty in one sense, and not in the sense that unpredictability implies that some events can occur without their exact causes. The critical test is this: "Can it be shown that any event occurs without cause?" Well, what about free-will? The answer is just that living (as we do) in the condition of not knowing the multitudinous causes of the events in our lives is effectively the same as living in a world where chance and free-will do actually operate. The concept "free-will" is merely the illusion we have of the way our minds work, because we are not conscious of the forces causing them to work that way. So that our behaviour can only be such as is consistent with the possession of free-will.

The Plough, A. SHACKELL
Weston Turville, Bucks.

KASHMIR

SIR,—Kashmir is once again in deadlock. Passion and ignorance of the masses on both sides will forbid any stable and agreeable solution by plebiscite at present. Sufficient time must be allowed for stabilising the atmosphere before any such steps can be taken.

At the same time this fruitless squabble has cost India and Pakistan a tremendous amount of energy and resources which should immediately be available for substantial nation-building works. It seems one side or other is enjoying this tug of war in power-politics whereas the cry and agony of the impoverished masses are secondary affairs to them. Sirdar Patel recently stated in the Indian Parliament that defence expenditure has risen from £75m. to £112m. which obviously necessitates immediate cessation of hostilities.

Under the circumstances it would be better if the administration of the whole of Kashmir could be entrusted temporarily for, say, three years or until opportune time with an International Commission consisting of three members appointed by U.N.O. This Commission will act as a sort of Regency Council who will rule the country through a Ministry, the members of which should be appointed by negotiation with all the disputing parties in Kashmir. Each of the two Dominions will be allowed one political agent attached to it to look after its individual interests without right in any way to interfere in its internal affairs. At the same time the Governments of both Dominions and the press of all countries should be requested to use restraint in their references to Kashmir. A stable and harmonious condition may be created in this way under which agreeable solution may be found.

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Glasgow, W.2.

RADIO CRITICS

SIR,—Is Mr. Ronald Gow's suggestion that the B.B.C. Critics should never all agree in an unfavourable criticism of a play, film or book, even if they happen all to be of the same opinion? I agree that it is dull when there is no argument, and unfortunate for the author criticised when the verdict is against him; but critics must speak as they feel. Mr. Gow and I are in the same case, for the Critics recently all concurred in an unfavourable view of a travel book of mine (too much description, too few personal anecdotes they quite reasonably felt) and, though I was disappointed that none of them had enjoyed it, and though it might have made a better discussion if they had differed a little, I did not question their right to say what they thought. It was not the kind of book that they cared about, and they could not be expected to pretend otherwise. But I do not suppose that any permanent damage was done either to my book or to Mr. Gow's play. ROSE MACAULAY

LOUDSPEAKERS

SIR,—I searched the correspondence columns of your last two issues for an answer to Mr. Priestley's strong words about loudspeakers, but I was disappointed.

What has happened, I wonder, to all the M.P.s and County and Local Councillors who fondly imagine that the use of loudspeaker vans helped to persuade the public to come to their meetings and to vote for them? Are they going to swallow meekly the assertion that they are "barbarians unfit to represent anybody"? Where are all the political agents, where the manufacturers and sellers of "public address equipment," where all the megaphone maniacs who delight in hearing their own voices amplified ten times, waking up the babies, setting all the dogs barking, disturbing night workers and the sick?

Have they, perhaps, lost the use of their pens as some American car-users are said to have lost the use of their legs? And is the whole of the Public Relations Department of British Railways away on holiday in distant parts?

Is there no one, in short, to answer your cantankerous contributor's charge of idiocy, or have you received a spate of letters whose arguments only too well confirm it? CHARLES ESAM-CARTER

DREAM LOGIC

SIR,—I recently dreamt a "solution" to the literary puzzle contained in the two lines of Lycidas

"But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once and smite no more."

The two-handed engine is the "two massy keys" borne by St. Peter, of which "the golden opes, the iron shuts amain." The force of the word "amain" was also revealed to me. If "the golden opes," the state of the door must be locked. Therefore, the alternative action of "the iron" key must be to lock it yet more strongly—i.e., "amain." The word "smite" seemed at the time highly appropriate for the heavy movement of a "massy" key in the lock. Moreover the admission to or exclusion from Heaven is irrevocable; hence the keys "stand ready to smite once and smite no more." B. M. WILKES

ROSSETTI

SIR,—Your issue of June 25th contains a notice of my *Dante Gabriel Rossetti—His Friends and Enemies* which I cannot pass over without a few words of reply.

Your reviewer states that my book is "intended to be a crushing retort to those irreverent persons, such as Mr. Evelyn Waugh and Miss Violet Hunt, who in comparatively recent years have dared to cast aspersions on her Uncle." If this was my intention it has not been unsuccessful: Violet Hunt—the author of some of the worst "aspersions"—having by now been definitely abandoned to the crows. Referring to Mrs. Rossetti's death, your reviewer writes: "Miss Hunt gave two contradictory accounts. . . . Her variations are unconvincing, and Mrs. Angeli naturally does not believe a word of either version." Miss Hunt, who is now thus summarily dismissed, was not so many years ago a *chef d'école* in Rossetti denigration. I answered her in her lifetime, when she and her followers could have defended her, were defence possible.

To burden the columns of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION with a childish discussion of Rossetti's "selfishness" and mercenary outlook is not my intention. The question of his friendships with many eminent Victorians is interesting, and in my book I have followed these up with well authenticated data, which no attempt is made to impugn. To say that "Mrs. Angeli herself admits quarrels", which in fact she has been at elaborate pains to prove unproved or non-existent, is either ingenuous or disingenuous. There is no answering mere reiteration. Nor is the present ruse of suddenly dismissing Rossetti the unworthy man to decry Rossetti the unworthy artist one with which I am at present concerned.

27 Thurlow Road, HELEN ROSSETTI ANGELI
N.W.3.

TIED COTTAGES

SIR,—With such strong arguments on both sides of the tied cottage question, might it not be a useful temporary compromise to require (say) three months' notice before a tenant can be evicted? This would give him at any rate time to look round; and the new stockman or other successor could be accommodated for that period in a lodging, or in the farmhouse.

ONLOOKER

ANTI-WAR GROUP

SIR,—I think it may be of interest to some of your readers to know that a Scientists' Anti-War Group has been reformed in Cambridge and we should be extremely glad if, through the courtesy of your paper, we could be put in touch with any similar group that may have been formed elsewhere in the country. Our aim is to collect factual data which bear on the problem of war or peace; in particular, we have formed groups to study and report on questions of international co-operation in science, on factors which determine the attitude of the public to war, on the causes of the failure of previous peace treaties and disarmament proposals, on the biological aspects of atomic warfare and bacteriological warfare—for which no popular critical exposition, comparable to Blackett's book, exists in this country—and finally to present the possible alternative contributions which science could make to human welfare if not deflected into war preparations. In connection with the latter we are reviewing material on available mineral, energy, and food resources and scientific manpower. We hope to publish pamphlets or books dealing with these subjects and to co-operate with all individuals or societies having objects similar to our own.

PETER A. JEWELL

Cambridge Scientists' Anti-War Group,
339 Cherry Hinton Road,
Cambridge.

SIR WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN

SIR,—At the invitation of the Executors, I have undertaken the writing and editing of the Life and Letters of the late Sir William Rothenstein. I shall be glad to hear of any paintings, drawings, letters or other material that should be recorded in the preparation of this historically most important work.

Letters and MSS. will be copied and returned by registered post; and a catalogue in acknowledgement of all sources of information will be published.

KENNETH ROMNEY TOWNDROW

Threals Lane Studio,
West Chiltington Common,
Sussex.

CAMBRIDGE JOURNAL

SIR,—We thank you for your generous comments on *The Cambridge Journal*, which appear on page 24 of the issue of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION for July 2nd. We would however point out that your notice erroneously refers to this journal as *The Cambridge Review*. *The Cambridge Review* is a well-known weekly university journal, and we shall be grateful if you can see your way at an early date to correct this notice, in order to avoid confusion between the two.

Bowes & Bowes, DENIS PAYNE,
Cambridge. Director.

TOLSTOI

SIR,—In a review by me of *Tolstoi*, by Ernest J. Simmonds, I commented unfavourably upon the fact that the book was not documented and that practically no information was given about the source of the material. Mr. Simmonds has written to me and informed me that there exists in America a special edition published by Little, Brown, which contains "100 pages of scholarly apparatus including the source of every quotation from Tolstoi and other material in the biography together with an extensive bibliography." It seems only fair to Mr. Simmonds that this should be known. LEONARD WOOLF.

Monk's House,
Rodmell, Lewes, Sussex.

Correction

We apologise for our double error last week in having given Mr. Basil Dean a title and having omitted it in the case of the Rev. Sir Herbert Dunnico.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE is one in every boat train that leaves Victoria, in every liner that leaves New York, in every bar of every hotel all over the world: the unhappy traveller. He is travelling not for pleasure but for pain, not to broaden the mind but, if possible, to narrow it; to release the buried terrors and hatreds of a lifetime; or, if these have already had a good airing at home, to open up colonies of rage abroad. We listen to these martyrs, quarrelling with hotel keepers, insulting cooks, torturing waiters and porters, the scourges of the reserved seat and viragos of the sleeping cars. And when they return from their mortifications it is to insult the people and the places they have visited, to fight the battle over the bill or the central heating, again and again, with a zest so sore that we conclude that travel for them is a continuation of domestic misery by other means.

Character that provokes fuss or incident is valuable to the writer of travel books, and it is surprising that this liverish nature, so continuously provocative, has rarely been presented. I do not forget the hostile travellers who, after being cosseted by the best hotels, turn round and pull their hosts to pieces, but to those who travel because they hate travelling itself. Of these Smollett* is the only good example I can think of and after 180 years his rage still rings out. Why is he still readable? Literature is made out of the misfortunes of others. (A large number of travel books fail simply because of the intolerable, monotonous good luck of their authors.) Then, it is a pleasure to be the spectator and not the victim of bad temper. Again, Smollett satisfies a traditional and secret rancour of our own: our native dislike of the French even when we are francophile; and recalls to us the old blisters of travel, the times *we* have been cheated, the times *we* threatened to call the police, the times when *we* could not face the food or the bedroom. But these are minor reasons for Smollett's readableness. We could, if we wanted to do so, let out a louder scream ourselves. Smollett is readable because he is a lucid author—as the maddened often are—writing, as Sir Osbert Sitwell says in his well-packed preface to the present edition, "in a beautifully clear, easy, ordered, but subtle English, a style partly the result of nature, and partly of many years of effort." It is the sane, impartial style which makes his pot-boiling *History of England* still worth dipping into and *Humphrey Clinker* nutritious to the end.

There is one more explanation of his instant readability. There is an ambiguity, always irresistible, in books of travel if in some way the unguarded character of the author travels with him like a shadow on the road. Smollett draws his own dour, stoical, irascible character perfectly. It is vital, too, that the author should have an interesting mind. Smollett has. He is not a gentleman on tour, but a doctor, and he carries the rash habit of diagnosis with him. His observations, like his quarrels, are built up with light but patient documentation. His passions are not gouty explosions, but come because his sense of fact, order and agreement has been in some minor particular outraged. It is laughable, but before the end we feel a touch of pity. If (it had slowly been borne in on him by the time his journey was done) he had been content to be cheated a little, to pay a trifle extra, to forget the letter of his bargains, if he had not bothered about the odd sous, he would have travelled faster in comfort and happiness. Alas, it was impossible. The one time ship's surgeon who had made his own way in the world on little education, whose sense of inferiority had not been reduced either by a rich marriage nor by great monetary success in his profession, who had been thrown into prison (and very rightly) for libel, for an outrageous attack on his admiral, and had sought out gratuitous quarrels with every English writer of his time, was not the man to allow others any latitude. The quarrel was what he wanted. Since the author of *Tom Jones* was not on the Continent Smollett took it out of the innkeepers.

It began on the Dover Road where "the chambers are in general cold and comfortless, the beds paltry, the cooking execrable, the wine poison, the attendance bad, the publicans insolent, and the bills extortion; there is not a tolerable drop of malt liquor to be had from London to Dover." It continues in Boulogne where the people are filthy, lazy, "incompetent in the mechanical arts," priest-ridden, immoral, their wine bad—he drank no good wine in France—and their cooking worse. Smollett, who was travelling with his wife and servants, five persons in all, preferred to buy and prepare his own food, such were his British, albeit Scottish, suspicion of the French *ragoût*. As for the French character, vanity is "the great and universal mover of all varieties and degrees." A Frenchman will think he owes it to his self-esteem to seduce your wife, daughter, niece and even your grandmother; if he fails he deplores their poor taste; if you reproach him, he will reply that he could not give higher proof of his regard for your family:

> You know, Madam [Smollett writes to an imaginary correspondent], we are naturally taciturn, soon tired of impertinence, and much subject to fits of disgust. Your French friend intrudes upon you at all hours: he stuns you with his loquacity: he teases you with impertinent questions about your domestic and private affairs; he attempts to meddle in your concerns; and forces his advice upon you with unwearied importunity; he asks the price of everything you wear and, so sure as you tell him, undervalues it, without hesitation: he affirms it is bad taste, ill-contrived, ill-made; that you have been imposed upon both with respect to fashion and the price. . . .

Has this race of egotists and *petits-maîtres* any virtues? They have "natural capacities" (it appears) but ruined by giddiness and levity and the education of the Jesuits. It is, however, unfair to describe them as insincere and mean:

> High flown professions of friendship and attachment constitute the language of common compliment in this country, and are never supposed to be understood in the literal acceptation of the words; and if their acts of generosity are rare, we ought to ascribe that rarity not so much to a deficiency of generous sentiments, as to their vanity and ostentation, which, engrossing all their funds, utterly disable them from exerting the virtues of beneficence.

No, there is nothing to be said for the French. Their towns are often better than their inhabitants and in the descriptions of places we see Smollett's virtue as a writer. Clearly, like some architectural draughtsman, ingeniously contriving his perspectives, he has the power to place a town, its streets, its industries, its revenues and even its water supply, before us like a marvellous scale model. We get a far clearer notion of what a French town was like in the 1760s than we can form for ourselves of an English town to-day. Smollett was a sick man on this journey, he was travelling in search of health, and he brings to what he sees the same diagnostic care that he brought to the illnesses of others or his own; but he had grown up under the matter-of-fact and orderly direction of his time. Even when one of his inevitable rows begins—he swears he has been given bad horses, bad servants, bad meals, made to wait beyond his turn at the coaching stations and so on—they are conducted with all the sense of orderly manœuvre which he must have observed in his life at sea. We know exactly where he sat and where the innkeeper stood when the row began, and how often the doctor banged up the window of the coach and—one can see his ugly, peevish, stone-yellow face, for in a fit of repentance he describes it—refused to budge until the bargain was fulfilled to the letter. The astonishing thing is that he is always defeated; but petulance has no authority. Here is a typical upset at Brignolles—it was followed by worse at Luc: there the whole town turned out to see the defeat of the Doctor:

> At Brignolles, where we dined, I was obliged to quarrel with the landlady, and threatened to leave her house, before she would indulge us with any sort of flesh meat. It was meagre day, and she had made her provision accordingly. She even hinted some dissatisfaction at having heretics in the house; but I was not disposed to eat stinking fish, with ragoûts of eggs in onions. . . . Next day when we set out in the morning from Luc, it blew a north-westerly wind so extremely cold and biting that even a flannel wrapper could not keep me warm in the coach. Whether the cold had put our coachman in a bad humour, or he had some other cause of resentment against himself, I know not; but when we had gone about a quarter of a mile, he drove the carriage full against the corner of a garden wall and broke the axle tree.

"Resentment against himself!" Smollett would understand that. It is the antidote to Sterne.

A useful and detailed Life of Smollett has just been written by a conscientious American scholar† One sees that Smollett, caught between Grub Street and the gentleman writers, a commercially popular professional who made enough money to employ ghosts and hacks, was a man of hypersensitive, jealous yet remorseful temper, ardent and generous, yet easily stung and quick to sting. His sensibility has led to the suggestion that the passages of grossness and brutality, his chamber-pot humour, are not the broad comedy of a man who liked a dirty joke and the writing on the lavatory wall, but disclose a horror of the flesh, the wincing of the man with a skin too few. Like many doctors, he jokes brutally about the body because it shocks him. Up to a point this seems to me certainly true: to deny it is to deny the double mind of many eighteenth-century writers who were not less moved to reform manners because it happened to pay them to be gross and licentious in presenting the case. Smollett in his *Travels* is a fastidious man; he has the doctor's dislike of filth and the eighteenth century (as we see again in the case of Swift) saw the beginning of a hatred of domestic filthiness. The bad temper of Smollett, though it was aggravated by ill-health, became, to some extent, a protest against the squalor, incompetence and cruelty which impeded the sensible desires of the civilised man. He liked decorum. He hated the raffish, the Bohemian and the wild. He was, in short, one of the earliest respectable men, when respectability was a weapon of reform: when it meant that you were jeered at for objecting to capital punishment, flogging, the public exposure of bodies broken on the wheel by the roadside, and the maddening disorderliness of a system of travel which belonged to the middle ages and not to 1763. Smollett's temper was, in some respects, a new, frost-bitten bud of civilisation, of which sick, divided and impossible men are frequently the growing point.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *Travels Through France and Italy*. By Tobias Smollett. *Lehmann*. 8s. 6d.

† *Tobias Smollett*. By Lewis Mansfield Knapp. *Princeton U. Press*. London: *Geoffrey Cumberlege*, 25s.

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Mr. Deutscher has written an admirable book, a serious book which holds one's attention all the time for nearly 600 pages. First of all he knows his subject as few men in or out of Russia can know it; he knows Russia and the Communist Party; he has read every relevant book or document which he could lay his hands on; he never pretends to know more than he does, and whenever the reader begins to feel that he would like to hear on what authority a statement is being made, sure enough he finds that Mr. Deutscher conscientiously quotes him chapter and verse. He writes extremely well; he is intensely, but not heavily, interested in every facet of his vast subject, and since he manages somehow or other to keep the instrument of his intelligence bright and sharp all through, the reader too remains interested, even when he has to plough his way through the absurd theological wrangles of communist homoiousians and homoousians. And finally what crowns Mr. Deutscher's work is his intellectual balance. He has his own opinions and he never hesitates to state them; but if there are facts which tell against them, he states those too, and he never pretends to more knowledge or more certainty than he possesses. The book will, no doubt, be put upon the Communist Index, but the more one reads it, the more confidence one gets in its author's historical impartiality.

Mr. Deutscher has rightly called his book "A Political Biography," for it is a biography of politics rather than of a man. The extraordinary thing about Stalin is that the more one knows of him, the fainter becomes his human image. In the end there remains a grin—and a pretty grim grin—but no vestige of the Cheshire Cat. Even Stalin's politics have become shadowy. This is not Mr. Deutscher's fault; it is a tribute to his honesty; he is concerned to give us, not the stuffed figure of an imaginary Stalin, but the facts about Stalin; and if those facts go to prove that there is no such person, the blame must rest either with the person or with the facts.

Unless and until Stalin has been converted into a stuffed figure of historical mythology, he must remain the despair of the psychological historian. There is his achievement—colossal, incredible, magnificent, and abominable. As a world-breaker and world-maker his claim to greatness seems impregnable. But as soon as the tale begins to be told and the detailed facts examined, there seems to be no relation between the man and his achievement.

At first sight, when one looks back over his career and achievement, he appears to be a man of inflexible intention, iron will, and superhuman foresight—a man who knows exactly where politically he wants to go, both in the short and the long run, always sees two moves ahead of any opponent, and patiently, inevitably reaches each stage in his ruthless time-table, as punctually as a planet in its orbit, over the dead bodies of all, friends or enemies, who presume to get in his way.

But as soon as one examines, with Mr. Deutscher, his political itinerary in detail, one sees that this picture of Stalin is mythical; all the evidence is against it. If one is to judge from the known facts, the conclusion should be that intellectually he is a stupid man, with little power of understanding the broader and deeper currents in a political situation or of framing a long-term policy in order to control events and achieve his purposes. The picture which emerges from the facts is that of a man whose vision is limited and highly personal, but who sees his limited and personal objectives with remarkable clearness and pursues them with such superhuman patience, relentlessness, cunning and callousness as to give him a claim to the title of "great man."

All the Soviet leaders, from Lenin downwards, regarded Stalin as a stupid man. Again and again he was able to lure his friends and his enemies to their destruction because they relied upon their own cleverness and his stupidity. There is no record that he has expressed a single original thought either in speech or in writing. As a speaker or writer he is fumbling and platitudinous, his reasoning often intellectually childish. All through his career, whether he is at the beginning the devoted follower and echo of Lenin or at the end the Red Tsar, his portrait is the same—a grim, silent man sitting in the background, watching, waiting, always ready to act ruthlessly, but never understanding completely what it is all about.

What, then, is the explanation of his achievement? The achievement to some extent, like Stalin himself and the universe, must remain a mystery, but there are, I suggest, two factors which go some little way to explain it. The first, which comes out quite clearly in Mr. Deutscher's book, shows how he was able to obtain for himself, after Lenin's death, a position of impregnable power and so destroy all the other leading Bolsheviks, though several of them were much abler men than himself. These men, from Trotsky downwards, found themselves powerless, hopelessly entangled in a web which Stalin had patiently woven and in the centre of which he sat, the large impassive spider remorselessly waiting to devour the next unfortunate fly. The opportunity to create this personal position of power for himself came to Stalin when he was made General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1922. He must very early have grasped the significance of the opportunity and he used it with incredible cunning. His position enabled him to exercise decisive influence over appointments to the great majority of the key positions in the Party, and he proceeded at once unobtrusively to fill them with his own men. But he soon had another instrument of power which he used with the same unobtrusiveness and relentlessness. His position as General Secretary gave him the opportunity to control the Central Control Commission which was in charge of the so-called purges. "Unofficially," as Mr. Deutscher says, "Stalin became the chief conductor of the purges." Thus he concentrated in his own hands the machinery for appointing obedient followers to key positions and the machinery for eliminating any one who opposed him. Even before Lenin's death, he had almost perfected his control of the machine and it is clear that Lenin himself, just before his death, became aware of this and was preparing to break Stalin's power. Trotsky and the other old Bolsheviks, when it came to a show-down, found that Stalin's power over the machine was impregnable.

The other factor is more complicated. The mystery of Stalin as world-maker lies in the discrepancy between the poverty of his policy and the magnitude of his achievement. His policy has continually vacillated and contradicted itself; his assumptions have been ludicrously wrong and his anticipations proved false by events; he has repeatedly used a sledge-hammer to crack a pea-nut and so destroyed the prosperity and lives of millions of his own people to no purpose. As Mr. Deutscher says, the control of events over him so often was much stronger than his control over events. Yet the final achievement—whatever one may think of his methods or the value of the result—of this new Russia is a gigantic achievement and apparently deliberately attained by him. He has performed the conjuring trick of converting a backward, eighteenth-century, agricultural country into a highly industrialized modern state, in two decades, a feat which elsewhere has required two centuries. He has destroyed the armies of the strongest military power in the world and has made Russia now more powerful than any state except the United States. The explanation seems to be that a man of limited intelligence and understanding, if he gets control of the machinery of power in a modern state, and provided that he is sufficiently ruthless, can for a time achieve almost anything. His position is impregnable and, unlike ordinary mortals, he need not count the cost either of the world's misery or his own mistakes. For a time . . .

LEONARD WOOLF

THE AUGUSTANS

The Admirable Lady Mary. By LEWIS GIBBS. *Dent.* 15*s.*

How many literary histories have contrasted the extravagance of the Elizabethans with the moderation of the Augustans; the strangeness and general unaccountability of the contemporaries of Essex with the unsurprisingness that Englishmen begin to take on in the age of Dryden! Wit grows polite; numbers learn to flow like the Thames, "strong without rage, without o'erflowing full"; the landscape through which we are borne on this comfortable current becomes increasingly familiar as we glide. For Addison has announced the era of the golden mean, achieved a reformation of manners, codified both good breeding and good sense. When Lord Petre in a frolic cuts off a lock of Miss Arabella Fermor's hair his action is gracefully reprehended in the most exquisitely civilised of all satires as not conformable with the nicer manners of the time.

Yet how many fine ladies known to Pope lost locks, and more than locks, in frolics? Miss Flippy, certainly, lost her fan; Silliander boasts that he snatched it and tore it to bits. And Silliander's friend Patch has a similar trophy to display:

> This snuff-box which I begg'd she still deny'd,
> And when I strove to snatch it, seem'd to hide;
> She laughed and fled, and as I sought to seize,
> With affectation crammed it down her stays,
> Yet hop'd she did not place it there unseen;
> I press'd her breasts, and pull'd it from between.

These ladies (who are mere fictions) were assaulted by gentlemen; Mrs. Murray (an actual lady of quality, and very pretty and agreeable) suffered an attempted rape at the hands of her father's footman—and this exploit too is celebrated by the Augustan muse in gay verses circulated for the diversion of Mrs. Murray's friends:

> I saw the dear disorder of your bed;
> Your cheeks all glowing with a tempting red;
> Your night-clothes tumbled with resistless grace,
> Your flowing hair play'd careless down your face,
> Your night-gown fastened with a single pin . . .

In neither case did the couplets come from Grub Street. They were the work of another lady of quality, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. She was proud of them (and particularly of the single pin which, with a thrift perhaps learnt from her dull and respectable husband, she employs again when describing a similar situation). Presently indeed, a little over-estimating the edge of her verse, she took on Pope. The two had for long been acquaintances, exchanging charming letters; they quarrelled upon some occasion not of sufficient weight to have left any certain record of itself behind. Lady Mary circulated verses animadverting upon the obscurity of Pope's birth and declaring his physical deformity to be a divinely appointed emblem of his crooked mind. Pope in his beautifully cadenced couplets declared that Lady Mary's lovers contracted a disreputable disease. Not being able positively to overgo this, he later added to the indictment such details as that Lady Mary's linen was dirty, her husband a miser, and the happy pair's board so frugal that a second half pint of wine was reserved for some such exceptionally blessed occasion as the rumour that their only son had been drowned.

Lady Mary had been rash before, carrying to a runaway match no greater dowry than a nightgown and a petticoat. But this marriage, although it ended in a mysterious twenty years' separation much speculated upon in Mr. Gibbs' pleasantly ambling biography, was more fortunate than that of her sister Frances. She, regularly and decently purveyed to the Earl of Mar, lived to see her husband a Jacobite exile, to be driven out of her mind by his cruelties, and subsequently to be abducted by Lord Grange. About the abduction the solidly useful Mr. Wortley made interest, and even secured—was he not reputed to be the wealthiest man in England?—the interposition of the Lord Chief Justice. The purpose of Lord Grange's rape seems to have been financial rather than venereous. Still, his lordship was pretty tough all round: had he not, in the interest whether of scientific experiment or of privately executed justice, shut up his own wife for several years in solitary confinement on the island of St. Kilda? At least the third Earl of Bute, to whom Lady Mary reluctantly married her daughter, proved a better investment. As dull as Mr. Wortley, and occupying himself on his remote estates in the study of agriculture and botany, he later became the most powerful man in England—not on the strength of these employments (which must betoken, as Lord Chesterfield pointed out, rather an industrious than an elevated mind) but as having been on the spot to play a rubber of whist with the Prince of Wales on a rainy day at the Egham races. He went about London with a bodyguard of pugilists.

These are random glimpses into the Peace of the Augustans. We may believe that such a world made a greater impact upon the young Mary Pierrepont than did ever the estimable Edward Wortley. But Mr. Gibbs, concentrating upon that enigmatical personal relationship—of which he gives, indeed, a judicious and perceptive account—fails to explore fully the influence upon a growing mind of so artificial a society. The young are much at the mercy of fashion, and none the less so if they happen to be observant and clever. Lady Mary grew up to the spectacle of a pervasive heartlessness, and scarcely knew it as an affectation beneath which common human nature lay undisturbed. She was to live through other vogues—and particularly that obverse one of sentiment which swung into view as this departed—but it was in this first minting that she took her stamp. And as she over-estimated her power in verse satire so did she over-estimate the merit of her indeed admirable letters, judging them, simply because they had so acrid a wit and so high a polish, equal to those of Madame de Sévigné. Much of her familiar writing suggests her age at its moral worst, and hence in the main that reputation for personal depravity about which Mr. Gibbs displays a wholesome and well-argued scepticism. But as well as strength of intellect she possessed high qualities of courage and character. What other woman of her day, exiled for a generation from everything in which she had taken delight, would have maintained relations of mutual respect with a stodgy husband, or have endured so much loneliness and ridicule uncomplaining, with a head held high before the world? Lady Mary, in one aspect so fine if so hapless a flower of the age of Horace Walpole, is in another aspect, like Swift, a stranger to the time. Potentially an enchanting Meredithian heroine, she died thirteen years before the birth of Miss Austen.

J. I. M. STEWART

THE MAN-POWER FACTOR

Labour. By P. SARGANT FLORENCE. *Hutchinson's University Library.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This, though ill-written, is a useful little book. Making no attempt at originality, it "pots" conveniently a great deal of valuable information. Its theme is Labour, not as a political force or as an industrial movement, but simply and solely as a "factor of production." It discusses such matters as productivity, fatigue, accidents, absenteeism and labour turnover, selection and training of employees, the varying qualities of male and female, young and old workers, wage-determination, unemployment and the means of preventing it, incentives and deterrents to output, and, rather inadequately, the problem of the "control of industry." Seeking to advance the cause of "scientific" organisation of man-power to the fullest practicable extent, Professor Florence draws comprehensively on the studies of such bodies as the Industrial Health Research Board in this country and on the much larger volume of work carried out in the United States. He tells the reader a little about the famous "Hawthorne Experiment," about the Bedaux system and various other derivatives of Taylorism, and about Lord Beveridge's studies of the incidence of unemployment on younger and older workers. Opinions of his own crop up from time to time—

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for example, he argues convincingly that women's labour is underpaid in relation to its productivity as compared with men's—but in the main he is less concerned to give opinions than to record the results of published factual investigations. Crowding many matters into but a little space, he has no room to deal fully with any of the subjects he attempts to cover; and the consequence is that he leaves many questions inadequately explored. But for anyone who wants a brief and elementary book ranging over the entire field of personnel problems this is the book to be recommended for a start.

It is indeed surprising that no handy volume of this kind has been written until now—at any rate in this country. There are, of course, legions of studies—good, bad and indifferent, elementary, advanced, and highly technical—covering particular parts of the immense field. What Professor Florence has done is to put the whole thing together, as far as it can be put together in a couple of hundred pages. Every personnel officer and every factory welfare worker will benefit by reading it; but most of all it should be read by employers and trade union officials, who will alike find in it a good many things that can help them to do their respective jobs better and with less friction, both to their own and to the national advantage.

G. D. H. COLE

THE MISTRESS OF WESTFIELD

Constance Louisa Maynard. Mistress of Westfield College. By C. B. FIRTH. *Allen & Unwin.* 18*s.*

Constance Maynard, who founded London University's Westfield College in 1882, was for seventy years a meticulous diarist. In accordance with her wishes Dr. Firth, an old student and friend, was handed the complete records for the purpose of writing the official Life. This, always a perilous undertaking, cannot have been easy for a clearsighted though sympathetic biographer. Besides the problem of what to omit—for the diaries are as graphic as they are numerous—was the more delicate one of whether to include. So much that she read, Dr. Firth relates, was private and painful, even "startling." Yet the story has far more than a specialist appeal. We must admire the honesty and intelligence with which she has arranged the material of this interesting book; it presents not only a passage of educational history but an instructive study of the relation of circumstance and temperament.

Into a family prosperous, self-contained, and dominated by the mother, a woman of uncompromising piety, Constance Maynard was born in 1849, the seventh of eight children. To doubt is sin, their mother told them. They did not doubt. At the age of four they were supposed to have learnt submission of will. Idle thought was not encouraged. "If the question was asked, 'What are you doing?'" a cousin recorded, "the child must be ready with a prompt reply at every hour of the day." Novels (except Scott's) were barred; so were dancing and outside festivities, though they were once allowed to go to a children's party at the house of their astronomer neighbour Sir John Herschel. They grew; they were vigorous and talented, and the walls still held them. Can there be a single parallel today to the lives led by young adults like the Maynards—no rarity a hundred years ago? The daughters' clothes were always two years out of date: "the uniform of the world" was Mrs. Maynard's term for current fashions. "A girl who looked like that," she observed of a crinoline-wearer, "could not possibly be of any use in the Kingdom of God." (There was always an aptness about her comments. She told Constance who, at ten, had written a hymn: "Christian verses are often very sweet, without having much poetry in them.") All letters were opened by the mother; all invitations (and proposals of marriage) submitted to her decision. The pursuits that this remarkable woman devised were not only the "printing, heraldry, willow-plaiting, perspective and Greek alphabet" of their early youth. They ranged from making a complete revision of the Prayer Book ("we settled everything very simply and clearly") to dissecting and boiling, under the father's direction, a hyena's head.

But how much they were affected by the "pat pat, patting-down of all ambition" they hardly realised at the time. We may wonder that Constance managed at the age of twenty-two to join the women's college which had just started at Hitchin, and would presently become Girton—even so, it was only on the understanding that she was not to sit for a degree, nor to think of earning her living afterwards. "That would be poor work indeed for one in my position, and very unsuitable." With her good looks, good manners and strong principles she soon became the "show student." The bare walls (like "our Workhouse at home") and the graceless meals, which Virginia Woolf was deploring half a century later ("a big leg of beef and a single dish of kedgeree" was a sample) did not dismay her. But the worldliness did. The idea became fixed, to start a college "externally just like Girton, but where the name of Christ is loved and honoured." The three years over she returned home, obedient though restless. Seven years later we find her installed as Mistress of the new-born Westfield College.

Perhaps there is a lesson in the fact that it was a financial crisis that broke down the charmed barrier between the Maynard home and the world and set Constance free, first to teach at Cheltenham and St. Andrews, then to study art, and practise evangelism in London. She was at the Slade School "copying an autotype of Michael Angelo's" when wealthy Miss Dudin Brown drove up in her carriage and pair to see the young woman who, she heard, wished to start a college on Christian principles. The old lady had £20,000 ready for just such a purpose. Meetings followed; committees were formed, and Constance's plans admired. She had in the past hesitated over offers of marriage and of responsible professional posts. This time, she had no doubts.

Reading, we catch the excitements of those early days—and the difficulties, when students had to be sought as well as staff, and when the Mistress was also housekeeper, teacher, organiser and secretary. (Frances Gray, one of the first lecturers, describes how she was given on the moment of her arrival a rusty scythe, and set to mow the lawn). The Council, asked to sanction extra domestic help or the use of bicycles by the students, were critical and obstructive. "Must it cost so much?" Miss Dudin Brown would ask. "Must the students be so absorbed in these hard degrees?" "Well, it is not what I intended." The Mistress, however, having little respect for half measures, insisted on the importance of the academic side of the college. She could have done, as it happened, no wiser thing.

But was it wholly a tale of success? Constance Maynard's achievement was larger than she knew, but it was not what she had envisaged. She had founded a thriving college of the University but, as children do, it grew away from her original planning. Her real interest was not in reform or in popular education, but in giving opportunities to young women like herself in character and social standing. Even fifty years ago, however, Constance Maynards were few, and undergraduates saw no sin in dancing, novel-reading, theatre-going and other "worldly" pleasures; few, indeed, shared the Mistress's passionate interest in abstract theology. (In her lifetime, I am told—she died in 1935—the students chose to transfer their subscriptions from the *Hibbert Journal* to *Vogue*.) A Divinity Faculty that she tried to start in 1901 died for lack of entrants. Her greatest disappointment was Effie, an Italian child whom she adopted at the age of six, and hoped to turn into her successor at Westfield. Dr. Firth devotes a long chapter to the details of this strange and dreadful story. Effie, bright and sharp enough, but insecure, sardonic and suspicious, accepted Constance's gifts and rejected her moral teachings with equal detachment. No school or family where she was placed during College terms would keep her for long. She drifted into domestic

service, then in and out of the Salvation Army (" self-abuse " seems to have been a particular criticism) and died at thirty-two in a workhouse infirmary.

Age appears an insufficient reason for the Mistress's retirement in 1913, in her early sixties. She still had twenty-two vigorous years, which she spent in cycling, travelling, religious controversy, and incessant writing of letters, articles and poems. Readers of the later pages of this paper may like to think of her entering regularly for literary competitions in the *Westminster Gazette*. But it is the diaries and letters, with their vivid, exact descriptions of people, individual and alive in a sentence; of situations, and, with a devastating objectiveness, of her own reactions to them, that suggest a prose gift too often put to a narrow use. She herself regretted that her ability in another direction—scientific experiment—had no chance to develop. There is no doubt that her early training, with its deliberate frustrations and its dogmatic moral code, hampered a mind naturally analytic and searching. But she could not outgrow that rigid teaching. It gave her force and singleness of purpose; it made it impossible for her to find happiness. We should remember, of course, that happiness was never its intention.

NAOMI LEWIS

A POET'S TRAVEL-BOOK

News from South America. By G. S. FRASER. *Harvill Press.* 10s. 6d.

A great deal of good will and curiosity is needed to carry the most enthusiastic ambassador of culture through an exhausting programme of official receptions, and the round of strange food, strange drinks, faces and places; the unlooked for, imaginatively significant, humanly valid moments that come to the Rimbauds of this world come less often to these invited poets. Mr. Fraser, who went to South America under the auspices of the Hudson Institute, nowhere says this, and his book is most courteous. He seems to have taken cheerful good will with him to slaughter-houses, model factories, ministries, official receptions and cemeteries, enjoying everything to some extent and some things very much. He has made the best of his experiences, and although this book is in its nature ephemeral, it is one of which the author need never be ashamed to be reminded. Kindly, shrewd, open-minded and unromantic, Mr. Fraser is the perfect cultural observer and cultural reporter. He manages to keep everything, including himself, in a clear middle-distance.

To Peron, for example, Mr. Fraser is scrupulously, liberally, fair. He met Peron twice, and believes that he has made a quite honest attempt to improve the conditions of the working classes. He also records the General's views on modern painting: " He liked to recognise things in painting—these, for instance, were the hills and trees, that was the very sky of Cordoba. But as for these modernist distortions, *they must be cut down*"—and here, if the General reached for his revolver, our poet does not.

It was not in Argentine, however, but in Chile that we see Mr. Fraser's moderating rationality most strongly assailed. Its damp fields and peasant houses reminded him of Scottish crofts, and the Indian past gives to Chilean life something of the romantic retrospect that Ireland has. Again, like Ireland, Chile is a country where poets may also be senators, like Gabriela Mistral, and like Pablo Neruda the communist, who was Mr. Fraser's host during his stay. The greatness of Neruda comes through on every page, as for example in his account of the imaginative riches of Neruda's house, with its strange treasures, shells and picture postcards, butterflies and antique masks, a house of genius. Mr. Fraser heard Neruda deliver the speech in defence of the striking miners that was to send him into exile. The hero almost made Mr. Fraser forget the Real Business of Politicians, for he found in Neruda a quality that " has nothing it to do with whether his philosophy of the world is right or whether his politics are right. It is something that one responds to, that one yields to, with an immediate intimacy." The man of action and suffering—innocent and dangerous, he calls him—towers, after all, over Peron with his programme of reforms. All the more credit to Mr. Fraser's stubborn moderation that he pulls himself up at this point to set down the objections to Neruda's kind of romantic nationalism.

KATHLEEN RAINE

SHORT STORIES

A Long Fourth. By PETER TAYLOR. *Routledge.* 8s. 6d.

Thou Shalt Not Suffer a Witch. By DOROTHY K. HAYNES. *Methuen.* 9s. 6d.

The Game Cock. By MICHAEL MCLAVERTY. *Cape.* 9s.

Three volumes of short stories by three good writers this week, all authors of imagination and accomplishment.

Peter Taylor, an American, who wrote a good many of these tales whilst still an undergraduate, is more than half-way to being a novelist. His stories are long, and in each of them he builds up an unusually detailed and solid picture in depth of some group of people—mostly families of the middle class world of the upper South. He puts a great deal into the picture; we get the family and the class conventions and traditions, the personal ideologies, the conflicting pieties and contentions of the circles about which he writes. All this makes harder work for the writer, no doubt, but easier work for the reader. For the imaginative effort that a reader has to make in entering a short story and achieving the illusion of reality is considerable (in this connection I feel that it is high time that one or two names of great readers began to appear in the New Year's Honours lists along with those of the great writers) and, as I say, to be perpetually dodging in and out of a lot of different worlds in between the covers of one book requires great stamina and literary good will, but in *A Long Fourth* we have, as I remarked, comparatively few worlds to enter, and ample time, once inside, to waltz round in leisurely contemplation and enjoyment of the whole affair.

The title story itself is perhaps the best. It shows us Dr. Wilson (" Sweetheart ") and his conventional wife Harriet, their two daughters—nice girls, but too long in the leg and dreadfully quarrelsome, the handsome and stony-hearted son (with whom Harriet Wilson is painfully, though unconsciously of course, in love), and lastly the black man-servant " T.B.", who smells so strong, together with his adoring old aunt the cook. You might say the subject of this story is the colour bar, for the author draws a parallel between the white woman's passion for her son and the black woman's passion for her nephew, and proceeds to show how these companions in misfortune, instead of achieving sympathy for each other and mutual support, become, because of the difference of their skins, mortal enemies. But the subject is much larger than that—that is what is so nice about Mr. Taylor. In this story he plays off more than one type of heartlessness against another, and the attitude of white toward black is merely one thread in the rich fabric.

One is aware, in this volume, of a certain immaturity in the author. He cannot always finish his stories off. One is sometimes conscious, upon the last page, that a certain point has been worked up to, and yet (once or twice) one seems at the last moment to have missed the clue.

I particularly enjoyed " Fancy Woman," however, in which just that thing happened—the author had evidently worked up to his point in a remark that the schoolboy son made, on the last page, to his father's vulgar mistress, yet one was baffled because one couldn't somehow fit it on to the boy's previous behaviour. Maybe it was my own fault. Anyway, " Fancy Woman " is a most amusing portrait. And one feels in reading moreover—and in reading all the tales—that

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Mr. Taylor is going to turn into a worthwhile novelist.

The other two volumes on the list are unmistakably written by short story writers *par excellence*. Miss Haynes specialises in the macabre. She is an original writer in that she has the power of making supernatural happenings not only convincing but totally realistic. There are twenty-six stories here, as opposed to Mr. Taylor's seven—and each story is a mouthful with a very strong flavour, and a good many of them one wants to spit out again immediately, so horrifying they are.

My own favourite is "The Changeling." This is about a little girl who, whilst lying in bed at night, was stolen by a witch and taken away to live with the "little people." It is an age-old plot but Miss Haynes has brought it up to date. The loneliness of the child passing her years in a sort of limbo beside a mysterious lake in the land of the "little people," the old witch herself sitting hunched up on a gargoyle with her "hair like nettle blossom with the blight on it," and her hands green as verdigris with the mildewed warts on them, and finally the dismal return home to meet face to face her changeling self on earth now grown old—these things are real enough to have happened in the next street, yet have the authentic fairy tale feeling, a feeling of prosaic myth which is in some way cruelly and imaginatively true to life.

This writer can equally well, when she wants to, tell stories that are not supra-normal. Such a one is the excellent "Double Summer Time," where the state of mind of the lady of the Manor who takes upon her shoulders such a multitude of things—notably the camping holiday of the Girl Guides—because she does not want to face the fact that she is growing old, is so vividly and tactfully presented to the reader. There are even one or two other stories that are not meant to be purely horrifying. But I must admit that most of these stories are too sadistic for my taste. Yes. Miss Haynes' talent is a Gothic blossom, and has a beastly stench of brimstone about it. Its habitat is a horrid, primal place. I think Edward Lear has as good a name for this plant as any other; you remember it in his Nonsense Botany book . . . "NASTI CREECHIA KRORLUPIA."

With Michael McLaverty's *Game Cock* we are back on to the earth's surface again, in the Irish winds and rains, and I hardly remember experiencing a more fresh and living atmosphere.

This writer's beam of vision lights upon life at a point where the apparently accidental physical paraphernalia, the sound of the rain "pecking" at the sails of a boat, the wakefulness of a spaniel in a draughty passage, the "stir of the cold sea" behind an unhappy lighthouse keeper's wife, the shovelful of clay thrown down on to an elder brother's coffin or the battered biscuit tin that a sick old man strikes with his stick by way of a bell—where all these things are seen to be of equally vital significance with the human happenings themselves, for this author is peculiarly aware that it is through our senses that we come to apprehend the meaning of events. I don't mean that there is any self-conscious philosophy of this kind on the part of the writer at all. The poetry of the sensual impact of the world obviously comes to him as easily as breathing.

I liked all these stories. It is hard to pick any favourites. A good story is "The Mother," about the cruel young widow who sent her old father to the poorhouse, so desperately anxious was she to better her position, to rise above the life she led in the slums. "The Poteen Maker" is an amusing tale. It is about a schoolmaster who, under the pretence of teaching his class a physics lesson in the art of purifying water, was in actual fact concocting a potent alcoholic beverage with the aid of the school Bunsen burner. "The White Mare"—the story of an old farmer clinging obstinately to his manhood and his independence in a battle against his ruthless sisters—that is one of the touching ones. Again—"Father Xmas"—a charming one.... But, reader, you should see these works for yourself. Not least among the pleasures in this book is the racy, imaginative use of language, an Irish heritage which we bourgeois English always dreadfully envy.

JULIA STRACHEY

ZIMRI

Great Villiers. By HESTER W. CHAPMAN. *Secker & Warburg.* 18*s.*

In the seventeenth century there were many men of high, or at least stiff principles. In regular succession they ended their days as exiles, or at Tyburn, or on the block. The next generation profited by their example: its politicians were more versatile, more elastic in their principles. The greatest of these more supple politicians was the first Earl of Shaftesbury, Dryden's Achitophel; the nimblest was his ally, the second Duke of Buckingham, Dryden's Zimri.

He was favoured from the start. His father had been that versatile Yorkshire gentleman who, by captivating two kings of opposite characters, had suddenly become the richest subject and the only Duke in England. The second Duke never knew his father, who had been murdered a few months after his birth; and since his mother had promptly plunged into Popery, he was brought up in the safe Anglicanism of the royal nursery. Not that these precautions made much difference—they seldom do. Of the three children thus carefully indoctrinated together, one, Charles II, became a Catholic sceptic, another, James II, a Catholic bigot, and the third, Buckingham, a complete free-thinker. A free-thinker he remained to the end, constant always to one principle, the sceptic's principle of religious toleration.

The rest of his career was less consistent: it was a series of adventures in high life. High life, of course, included politics. As a young man he travelled abroad, to Florence, where he "lived in as great state as some of those sovereign princes," and to Rome, then dominated aesthetically by Bernini and politically by Donna Olimpia, "the Pope's Whore" as Protestants genially described her. Back in England, an inconvenient revolution interrupted the gay life, so he intervened in revolution. He was unsuccessful. Fleeing abroad to the court of Charles II, he began a career of secret journeys and multiple conspiracies so complex that no one (except Miss Chapman, who does her best) has been able to discover any consistent principle in it. Clarendon and his friends, who knew upon what principles they wished to restore the King, were clear about it: the Duke, they said, "will no doubt marry Cromwell's daughter or be Cromwell's groom to save his estate." "Hard words!" protests Miss Chapman, although in fact Buckingham did the next best thing and saved his estate by marrying Fairfax's daughter. But Miss Chapman cannot help being somewhat partial to so exquisite a hero, "the finest gentleman of person and wit" that his contemporaries had ever seen. Consequently she has no use for Clarendon, "an intolerable and unattractive bore . . . entirely lacking in imagination, sympathy or charm." To a man whose whole life shows a genius for friendship this seems to me grotesquely unfair.

To the Restoration, in spite of his claims, Buckingham contributed nothing. His policy of alliance with the Covenanters had proved ruinous, his dealings with Levellers and Republicans had been useless, and he had ended by compounding privately with the usurper. Still, the indefatigable adventurer could not be kept down. He began a new career, first as the King's minister, in which he was ludicrously duped, then as a leader of Opposition, in which he utterly failed. His successes were not in politics but in literature, in the gay world of amorous and political intrigue, so inextricably intertwined (he was a member of that important department of state, the "Committee to get Mrs. Stuart for the King"), and in the fashionable pursuits of building and chemistry. Then, insensibly, came the decline. It began with his property. His vast estates lay unimproved while he dissipated fortunes on his great house at Cliveden, with its

terrace, its grottos, its cloisters and avenues and "stupendous prospects," on his glass-works at Lambeth, and on mere conspicuous waste.

His character sank with his fortune; his charm evaporated away; the irresistible virtuoso, the friend of Hobbes and Cowley, degenerated into "a disagreeable coarse voluptuary with a swollen nose and a double chin"; he forsook the beau-monde for low life; his tastes became queerer; and his faithful adviser Nell Gwynne, whose own standards were not too high (she had been "brought up in a bawdy-house, to fill strong waters to the gentlemen") begged him to buy new clothes so as not to "stink two storeys high when he knocks at the outward door." Miss Chapman charitably ascribes this unfortunate change to his odious mistress Lady Shrewsbury, whose husband he had incidentally despatched in a duel. In the end he withdrew altogether to Yorkshire, and there mitigated the tedium of country life by hunting among boorish squires over the ruins of his estates. One day, after a hard chase over those wild moors, he rested too long on the damp ground, took cold, and was carried off to die in a country inn. He left nothing, neither heirs to his property nor property to his heirs. All his works went speedily to wrack. Cliveden was demolished within a century and his brilliant comedy, *The Rehearsal*, is unread. He survives not in his own works but in contemporary satire: he is Zimri, Great Villiers, the Duke of Bucks—not a historical figure but a rare social type.

In this book Miss Chapman has sought to reconstruct the historical figure. Historians may occasionally boggle at her historical generalisations, and she is sometimes more sympathetic to her hero than the evidence strictly allows; but her modesty disarms criticism and anyway these deviations are few and slight. The career of Buckingham was more personal than political, and the politics of the time were largely personal politics. In personal matters Miss Chapman is completely at home. She handles the evidence with skill, and tells the story with grace and ease. Her subject was neither great nor profound, he was colourful and interesting and, to the end, a wit: a biographer who possesses all these qualities, and strains no further, is perhaps his ideal biographer. EDWARD ALLIBOND

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Symphonies. NIELSEN: *Sinfonia Espansiva* (Radio Sym. Orch. Copenhagen/Tuxen. AK2161–5). The Dane, Carl Nielsen, who died in 1931; who wrote six symphonies, of which this is the third; whose music Sibelius has said that he prefers to his own: is a composer of profound individuality. He never strove to be "new" or "daring," or to smash any tradition or cadre. At first hearing he may seem merely academic. But his harmony is never dull or ugly; his progressions are as unexpected as those of Berlioz, and more logical; his tunes look austere and unrewarding, yet have a way of sticking in one's head, to reveal depths and beauties one had not suspected. His technique was magnificent but unobtrusive. A great and popular figure throughout Scandinavia, Nielsen is virtually unknown here, and Decca are to be congratulated on their courage in risking so large a work as the *Espansiva*. As the epithet implies, this symphony seems to express four kinds of spaciousness: first the glow of friendliness; then the expanse of a landscape (with two distant figures who sing, wordlessly: a most beautiful passage); thirdly the proliferations of the fancy; and finally the enjoyment of a public occasion on a sunny day. The performance we must suppose authoritative, and the recording—except for a slight blurring in the more exuberant tutti—is very sweet on the ear. SCHUMANN: No. 1 in B flat major, Op. 38 (NSO/Coppola. AK2151–4). An oddly Germanic choice for Coppola; but he seems to love the work, conducting it nimbly, with a high sense of the verdant lyricism and a clever ear for those moments when the wind and brass threaten to clot. There is some overloading, but the recording is bright and astringent, the violin tone good. BERLIOZ: *Roméo et Juliette;* Roméo seul; Tristesse; Fête; Scène d'amour (NBCSO/Toscanini. DB6665–7). Clearly a performance instinct with fire and love; but, except in the very first section, one's pleasure is impaired by the poor quality of the tone. On side 5 an almost indescribable effect—as if the recording needle were not tracking properly, or a connection were intermittent—adds to the feeling of discomfort.

Miscellaneous Orchestral. MUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Radiodiffusion Française Orch/Kletzki. LX1186–9). The Chantrey Bequest, as it were, in terms of music. As a piano suite, on the model of Schumann's *Carnaval*, this work is a monstrous failure, despite some piquant moments. In Ravel's clever and resplendent orchestral version, much of it can be enjoyed. Performance and recording extremely successful. JOHANN STRAUSS: *Die Fledermaus*—Overture (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1182). A fluent performance, replete with synthetic charm. The recording is not coarse, but the tone sounds "canned" and unreal. Bruno Walter's disc (HMV) still preferred. RICHARD STRAUSS: *Rosenkavalier Suite* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1183–5). Don't pay too much attention to what I say about this: a pot-pourri, with all the sections topsy-turvy, is a thing I loathe. Perhaps, if you never heard the opera. . . . Even then, with the voices either omitted altogether or insensitively played by wind instruments, and a recording like shallow treacle. . . . But enough! BACH: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1181). Mr. Ormandy does his best to make the orchestra sound like a gigantic organ; but the effect is not at all like Bach. The fugue is far too bouncing, and the monumental intention is further effaced by a cramped recording. WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger*—Overture (Suisse Romande/Knappertsbusch. K1905). Too fast (as usual nowadays), ill-balanced, shapeless. Recording fair. Better wait, for the time being. LAMBERT: "Horoscope" Ballet—*Saraband* and *Bacchanale*; LISZT: *Galop* from ballet "Apparitions" (Philharmonia/Lambert. DX1567–8). A most lovely set. The *Saraband* is one of Mr. Lambert's most beautifully sustained compositions and the recording is a treat. The *Bacchanale* disappears quietly, instead of boiling over—an imaginative effect. Though rumbustious and musically less interesting, the *Galop* comes through unscathed. CHERUBINI: *The Water-Carrier*—Overture (Bournemouth Municipal Orch/Schwarz. C3865). With this dignified and interesting piece the Bournemouth Orchestra makes its bow to discophils. A crisp, extremely well-conducted performance. The strings are not quite weighty enough to balance the brass in the tutti; otherwise it is plain that this is a most efficient little orchestra. The recording is nice and roomy. DELIUS: *Deux Aquarelles*, and MOZART: *Figaro*—Overture (Hallé/Barbirolli. C3864). The *Aquarelles* are arrangements for strings of two unaccompanied part-songs ("To be sung of a summer night on the water"). They are pretty and played with great gentleness and charm. Turn the disc over and discover a total failure: far too many strings, woodwind detail drowned—the whole thing bottom-heavy in a way that would have made Mozart tear his hair.

Chamber Music, Piano Solo, Organ. BARTOK: *Sixth String Quartet* (Hungarian Qt. DB9389–92). The superbly faithful rendering of an intense and sorrowful masterpiece. This quartet—far more than the last orchestral works—seems to me the crown of Bartok's achievement. Melodically and harmonically it reaches back to the Second Quartet, but the design and the thought are deeper and more masterly. The recording seems to transcend the limitations of the gramophone. BACH: *Suite No. 2 for Unaccompanied Cello* (Mainardi. AK2155–7). This Suite is No. 2 (*not* No. 11, as marked on the discs. There are only six in all!). Enrico

Company Meeting

THE "SHELL" TRANSPORT AND TRADING COMPANY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of The "Shell" Transport and Trading Company, Limited, was held on Thursday, June 30th, at Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London, E.C., Sir Frederick Godber (chairman of the company) presiding.

The secretary (Mr. P. B. Brown) read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors.

The chairman moved the adoption of the report and accounts and the payment of a final dividend for the year 1948 of 1s. per share or £1 Stock Unit free of income tax. Sir Robert Waley Cohen, K.B.E., seconded the resolution.

The chairman said: Mr. Troughton, who is a shareholder, has written to me to ask whether I can give any information as to the production and prospects of the newly developed New Guinea field, which, as mentioned in my statement, is a joint venture with two American companies and in which the group owns a 40 per cent. interest.

As shareholders will appreciate, despite the tremendous advances in the science of oil exploration, it is still not an exact science, and it has not been our policy in the past to prophesy too much regarding the prospects of newly discovered fields. I would say, however, that there are a number of structures in New Guinea within the concession of this joint venture still remaining to be tested, and several structures which have been proved oilbearing, but which have not yet been brought into regular production. We are satisfied that the investment that we have made to date will be justified. With a field which only came into regular production in December last, it is too early to give a reliable figure of production, but I may say that our forward estimates, which naturally are based on today's expectation of world consumption, do allow of a steady increase in production.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

On the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. George Legh-Jones, it was resolved that the vacancy caused by the retirement of Sir Henry McMahon, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., be left unfilled.

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WOLSEY HALL, OXFORD

Mainardi's playing is less emotional than Casals', but hardly less sensitive. His tone is strikingly luminous and varied, and he places his climaxes very skilfully—a matter of great difficulty in music of this kind. Only in the first Minuet does his bowing become a little too hefty for the microphone; elsewhere this is a most agreeable recording. BEETHOVEN: *Violin Sonata in C minor*, Op. 30, No. 2 (Schneiderhan/Wührer. LX1190–3). A most impressive set. The performance is noble, dramatic, and dynamically very wide in range. The recording is spacious and well balanced. The tone of Herr Schneiderhan's E string seems a trifle sour, but there is no doubt of the outstanding quality of his style. The fill-up is the *Allegretto* from Schumann's Sonata Op. 105. BOCCHERINI: *String Quartet in D major, Op. 6, No. 1* (New Italian Qt. AK2173–4). An amiable little quartet—Haydnesque, but full of touches which inform us unmistakably that a different mind is at work. It is admirably played and quite well recorded. RAVEL: *Tzigane* (Ginette and Jean Neveu. DB6907–8). This piece puts the violinist through her paces with a vengeance (unassisted by the piano for at least four minutes), but musically it is little more than a shrewd pastiche of Liszt. The playing of the piano part yields nothing in brilliance to that of Mlle Neveu. The recording is extremely well balanced. On side 4 is an arrangement of Chopin's little-known posthumous *Nocturne* in C sharp minor. MOZART: *Sonata, B flat major* (K570) (Schnabel. DB6839–40). A fine sonata, the slow movement of which is on a level with some of those in the late concertos. Schnabel's rendering is the acme of lucidity and expressive phrasing, and it is beautifully recorded. GRIEG: *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen: Solitary Traveller: To the Spring* (Gieseking. LX1194). Worthy to put beside the other disc of Grieg pieces, recently recorded by Gieseking. *Solitary Traveller*, in especial, is inimitably played. LISZT: *Funérailles* (Gina Bachauer. C3872). The pianist's style is well suited to Liszt; but her pedalling is here too heavy for recording purposes, and the octave triplets in the bass create a thick fog. The cantabile passages are admirably phrased, but all in all I cannot recommend the record. BACH: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* (Germani. C3866–7). Another triumph for Germani. It is wonderful to listen to the piece growing and expanding through artful changes of registration and a ceaselessly vigilant control of the rhythm. The recording is full and rich, but never overloads or confuses the parts.

Vocal. MOZART: Motette—"Exsultate, Jubilate" (Elisabeth Schwarzkopf/Philharmonia/Süsskind. LX1196–7). Erna Berger would have been my choice for this lacy work. Miss Schwarzkopf sings it well enough, but the recording is a flat disappointment, seeming as if secured in woollen gloves. All the high frequencies have been chopped off the voice, making it almost unrecognisable, and it never properly disentangles itself from the orchestra. Not recommended. MUSSORGSKY: *Boris Godunov*—"I have attained the highest power," Duologue, and Clock Scene (Kipnis/Tamarin/RCA Victor SO/Berezowsky. DB6482–3). A very ham performance, with far too much *parlando* and Kipnis deafeningly close to the microphone. This scene brings out all that is least acceptable in the style of a singer who is in many ways among the finest of our day. Yet I recommend the set, for the sly and vocally exquisite performance of Ilya Tamarin, as Prince Shouisky. The Clock Scene, too, where *parlando* is in place, goes very well and the orchestral playing is impressively dramatic. JOHANN STRAUSS: *Der Zigeuner-baron*—"Wer uns getraut"; LEHAR: *The Count of Luxemburg*—"Bist du's lachendes Glück" (Lisa Della Casa/Helge Roswaenge/Zurich Tonhalle/Reinshagen. K2181). Do not miss this record, if only for the beautifully limpid and unforced singing of Lisa Della Casa. Helge Roswaenge is efficient but too powerful in style for the music, which is delightful and well recorded.

N.B.—a most admirable little book, entitled *Record Collecting*, by Boris Semeonoff (*Oakwood Press*, 7*s*. 6*d*.). The discophil who is just starting a collection will find all sorts of useful information here, from criticism of artists to hints on storing and cataloguing discs. The book is well arranged and the author's comments seem to me invariably intelligent. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Odette. A Story of a British Agent. By JERRARD TICKELL. *Chapman & Hall.* 15*s*.

After battles of divided loyalty between her duty to her family and to her country, Odette Sansom was parachuted into France to help organise the growing resistance movements. Her story is not one of great achievement in this capacity—she was soon arrested by the Germans—but one of fortitude through months of imprisonment and torture. She clung stubbornly, through many prisons, to her small bundle of clothes, and her guards were made to wait while she tidied herself before being "interrogated." When the Germans began to undress her, preparatory to torture, she snapped: "I resent your hands on me. If you tell me what you want me to do, I will do it." In Fresnes prison she was comforted by a message scratched on the wall by a previous occupant: "Quand j'étais petite, je gardais les vaches; maintenant ce sont elles qui me gardent . . ." She was one of the few women to survive the notorious women's camp at Ravensbrück. Was it because she had used her husband's name of Churchill and was kept as a possible hostage? Did the German Commandant drive her from that screaming chaos to the American lines because he hoped to save his skin by handing back "a distant relation of Mr. Winston Churchill" to the Allies? Although Mr. Jerrard Tickell has had much official and unofficial data at his disposal in telling Odette's story he leaves many such queries unanswered. He cannot, perhaps, be blamed for this lack of continuity. It is less easy, however, to forgive the constant intrusion of his sometimes too facetious personality when relating facts.

Castles from the Air. With an Introduction by W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON. *Country Life.* 30*s*.

Those who spent some of the war years poring over aerial photographs with a small stereoscope realised that here was a technique that could be turned to many peacetime uses. Sooner or later the problems of stereoscopy applied to book illustration will be solved—there have been experiments already in books on botany, geology and meteorology. In the meantime it is astonishing how instructive ordinary aerial photographs can be, and their value in explaining medieval military engineering is obvious. A series of such photographs—fully annotated—of the castles of England and Wales would be an excellent guide to these sometimes very confusing objects. In this book, however, the annotation is insufficient and we get, not a standard work on the subject, but a picture book with 112 attractive photographs and an introductory essay. Some of the photographs are striking. Here is Deal Castle with its extraordinary elaborate semi-circular casemates; Peckforton, that learned imitation; Cardiff, Roman and Norman; and Maxstoke "crouching low within its watery cincture."

Briefed to attack. By AIR MARSHAL SIR HUGH LLOYD. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 18*s*.

Sir Hugh Lloyd was appointed Air Officer Commanding Mediterranean, with headquarters at Malta, in May, 1941. When he arrived on the island the sole air strength consisted of fifty-nine serviceable aircraft, of which only twenty-nine were Hurricanes; the number of airmen to fly them and service them was less than two thousand. With this tiny force Sir Hugh had to attack Axis shipping as well as defend Malta, and he attacked with such vigour that in June, 1941, alone, his aeroplanes destroyed 34,000 tons of shipping and severely damaged another 25,000 tons; and as the months passed the rate of destruction and damage increased. Sir Hugh rightly dismisses the notion that Malta was "an unsinkable aircraft-carrier": Malta survived because of the gallantry of its defenders and population; but all the gallantry in the world would have been in vain had the fighter planes been put out of action. As it was, during April, 1942, the peak-month of Kesselring's attack on the island, when 6,728 tons of bombs were dropped, there were days when the number of fighters Sir Hugh could put in the air fell as low as four. Reinforcements came through, but the supply position was so grave that the starvation date was assumed to be the middle of August. Then in July Kesselring's onslaught stopped. His losses had been great but the reason the attack was called off appears to have been a decision of Hitler's alone, who was all for throwing every aircraft he had in the Mediterranean into the battle Rommel was fighting in the Western Desert. Even so, this does not explain why Kesselring failed to attack the island with gliders in April, when British reconnaissance showed that glider fields in Sicily were ready even to the erection of the assembly sheds. Sir Hugh tells his heroic story modestly and with a generous appreciation of the efforts of all who surrounded him, airmen, soldiers, sailors and Maltese civilians alike.

Week-end Competitions

No. 1,012

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The bourgeoisie, who have long suffered here under the accusation of being "stuffy," are now being shot at from the other side. A Hungarian newspaper is quoted as speaking of the "bourgeois slogans of free love" and members "brought up in the moral swamp of the bourgeoisie." The usual prizes are offered for fourteen lines extracted from a poem describing this "moral swamp" in either the Miltonian or the Chestertonian manner. Entries by July 19.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,009

Set by Naomi Lewis

Prizes are offered for an extract of sixteen lines from a poem *The Parliament of Beasts*, in which the animals discuss the question of retaining dominion status with Man.

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Report by Naomi Lewis

Political satire of this kind has an old literary history: ghostly entries from (let us say) Chaucer, Spenser, Dryden and Byron would have provided a noble battle for the weekly guineas. But of our earthly competitors, it is hard to find one who respects both point and style. Lakon had four good lines:

> The Serpent called on Ox. "I would not try,"
> He said, "to change it. States and kingdoms lie
> Buried beneath each furrow I have trod.
> The status quo will end by act of God."

Joyce Johnson was witty, but was disqualified from the prize list for two unspeakable (i.e. unscannable) lines. Jack Bradstreet had something to say:

> "Have done with treason," howled the Dog in rage.
> "Man is the wonder of the world,
> A paragon of wisdom and the beasts' best friend."
> "No," murmured the Cat, "Not that, not that.
> A useful ally, but his strength is waning.
> Wait a little longer; his power will pass."
> "But then," said the Cow, "we'll starve.
> Who'll grow our grass?"

But what wild verses! Was it a case of wouldn't or couldn't? The greatest weakness was in characterisation—giving the right animal the right words. I mention no species, but are there not, in the Animal Dominion, Old Tories and Young Conservatives, Labour and rogue Labour adherents, Anarchs and Party Liners? Can we not recognise among our Beastly fellows the Member for —— and for ——? 25*s.* each is awarded to L. E. J., H. J. R., H. A. C. Evans, and Allan Laing. Honourable mentions: R. J. P. Hewison, Guy Kendall, Lakon, J. Raymond Majer, Hassall Pitman, W. H. Victory.

ASS, bringing in the Bill, felt sure the House,
—Since nothing would be changed for man or mouse—
Would vote for it. "You mean that Man will hate us
No less," asked RAT, "when we've Dominion
Status?"
"Rats!" shouted DOG. The Speaker eyed him hard
And called on COW to speak for the farmyard:
"Will Oxen still be beef? Will Sheep be mutton?
"Will Pig remain a synonym for glutton?"
ASS shuffled in his seat (he was not nimble
At parrying): "The Crown will be a symbol,"
He brayed at length. COW would not be brow-beaten:
"Shall we, or shall we not," she asked "be eaten"?
TIGER got up to deprecate this question:
"In India (laughter); what is LION'S opinion"?
"No status suits us LIONS like Dominion!"

L. E. J.

The Dog—whose speech was interrupted freely
By cat-calls—pleaded to retain the Collar
Not with the leash but as a Symbol merely.
"I am as freedom loving as you all are
But old Associations touch me, nearly."
"Spoken," the pig said, "like a pukka Wallah.
I wonder if my Canine Friend proposes
That *we* retain these *Symbols* in our noses."

The dog was dumb. Before that argument
The monkey doffed his fez. Debate grew louder.
The horse denounced the bit: The Elephant
That sharply pointed stick employed *sub cauda*.
The House resolved with almost no dissent
To "break and grind Man's Empire into powder"
Albeit the Hon. Member for Kilkenny
Had "never in his lives acknowledged any."

H. J. R.

Tho mette ther the beestes everichon,
And unto hem Nature spak anon:

"Now mote yow avyse, ye witen wel,
Wher that ye al with men wol dwel in-fere.
Ne yeve I nat yow conseil never a del,
But al and som shal speke in hir manere."
Than yaf the hors his doom, with lowly chere:
"Now verrayly, the beste reed I can
Is that we beestes curteys ben to man."

Anon-right tho bigan the fiers leoun:
"Wha herkned ever hath swich nycetee?
I wol nat me putte in subjeccioun,
Sin thilke maner lyf wol sone slee.
Me lyketh nat swich debonairettee.
Ich am a king, lord of the grene shawe,
Ne never have to men y-been felawe."

H. A. C. Evans

"And I, Sir," snarled the Bengal Tiger, "say
To cut the painter is the honest way:
These gilded links that tether beast to Man
Have curbed brute freedom since the world began."
"Beware rash action!" then exclaimed the Horse:
"All peaceful animals would know remorse
Were Man's protecting hand withdrawn, and we
Thrown on our own resources." "I agree."
The sleek Cat smugly purred. "Man's rule is mild,
And we live better than when we ran wild."
Then Panther rose, and with impatient bark,
Dismissed these statements as beside the mark.
"We are not all," he said, "Fifth Column beasts
Exchanging liberty for shameful feasts:
Some here do feel it is a bitter thing
To cringe subservient to a Human king." . . .

Allan M. Laing

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